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OF THE STATE OF NEW-YORK.

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TERMS

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OFFICIAL.

STATE OF NEW-YORK—SECRETARY'S OFFICE.
DEPARTMENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS.

TO TOWN SUPERINTENDENTS.

The commencement of a new and enlarged volume of the District School Journal, affords a fit opportunity for calling your attention to its reception and preservation in the several districts. The efficiency and success of the system depend so materially upon its faithful administration and upon the prompt and punctual performance of the various duties devolved upon those charged with that administration, that a rigid adherence in future to the requisitions of the law, will in all cases be insisted upon, where no unavoidable necessity exists for a departure from its strict provisions. It is therefore essential to the districts that the directions, decisions, and orders of the Department should be known and preserved: and you are directed to take immediate measures to secure the regular reception and preservation of the Journal, in the library of every district, by *specially calling the attention of the clerk of each district to his duty, and to insist upon its punctual performance, under the penalty prescribed by the sixth article of the act of 1839.*

S. YOUNG,
Supt. Com. Schools.

REPORTS OF COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS.

These valuable reports will be forwarded with the Session Laws, to the County Clerks—one copy for each county and town superintendent.

STATE CONVENTION OF COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS.

The State Convention of County Superintendents will meet at ROCHESTER on the FOURTEENTH* day of MAY next.

We are gratified in announcing that the Hon. SAMUEL YOUNG will probably be present at the Convention.

Invitations have been extended to the friends of education in our own and sister states; and there is reason to anticipate the co-operation of many distinguished advocates of general and sound education.

The town superintendents are earnestly requested to attend and share in the business of the Convention. Could a delegation be sent from each county, it would give great additional interest to its proceedings.

A general attendance is anticipated.

Members of the Convention are requested to make their arrangements to be in Rochester on Monday evening, or as early on Tuesday as possible, in order that the Convention may have at least a FOUR DAYS' SESSION, and be enabled carefully to mature its business.

The several committees appointed at the Albany Convention, to report on the subjects then allotted to them, are respectfully reminded of their duties.

We have the pleasure of informing the members of the Convention, that the citizens of Rochester, through their county and city superintendents, have courteously and cordially invited them to partake of the hospitality of their homes during the session.

By order,
WILLIAM WRIGHT, of Washington,
E. J. SHUMWAY, " Essex,
Secretaries.

* By resolution, the Convention at Albany adjourned to meet at Rochester on the fifteenth day of May, (Wednesday;) but in order to secure a longer session, the time has in this notice been anticipated one day, and the convention will therefore meet on Tuesday the 14th, instead of Wednesday.

REPORTS OF COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS.

THE following communications from Messrs. STEVENS and HENRY, present conflicting opinions on this important subject, which are now the more interesting, as they will aid in preparing for a full discussion of this great question at the Rochester Convention.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.

[Extract from the Report of D. H. STEVENS, County Superintendent of Franklin.]

"Order is heaven's first law;" so too, is good order in a school-room, a desideratum of no secondary importance, and I would be the last person to advocate the abolishment of corporal punishment, if by so doing, good discipline must be sacrificed to anarchy and confusion. But facts upon this subject, to which I shall by and by refer, proclaim, in language not to be misinterpreted, that the infliction of physical pain for misdemeanors, in every department of life, whether in civil, parental, or scholastic governments, may be abandoned not only with perfect impunity, but with the most happy results. That the infliction of physical torture for infractions, should be discountenanced by every member in the community, is evident from the following reasons:

1st. It cultivates the animal propensities of both pupil and teacher, at the expense of the moral faculties.

2d. It does not have its desired effect.

3d. It is a prolific source of dissensions in districts, and of dissatisfaction with teachers.

4th. Admitting that it is allowable in parents, no teacher is, or can be invested with the power which parents possess in this case; and,

5th. There is a better way.

In the prosecution of this subject, each of the foregoing objections will be separately considered. First, then, corporal punishment should be abolished, for the reason that it cultivates the animal propensities of both pupil and teacher, at the expense of the moral sentiments. That in the education of youth, the animal propensities should be made to remain as quiescent as possible, until the moral sentiments get the ascendancy, is an axiom which cannot be too strenuously inculcated by the learned, nor too well remembered by the illiterate. And it should be an object of primary importance with every teacher, to arouse and develop the latter, to the utmost extent of his abilities, while at the same time, he may safely entrust the former to the ever vigilant instincts of nature.

But how is it that corporal punishment excites these baser passions? The infliction of it arouses and develops the combative, and the fear of it the deceptive propensities. No scholar, were he large or small, however guilty and however penitent, was ever punished by the infliction of corporal pain, but that he felt a spirit of resistance, though, in consequence of physical inferiority, he might not manifest it. If penitent, this resisting spirit arose from the injustice of the punishment; if impenitent, though the infi- tive penalty might have been just, it arose from a pre-existing determination to trample, "rough shod," upon the salutary operations of the school,

irrespective of consequences. Such scholars had doubtless been made thus combatant, had been "whipt into pugnacity by surly, vindictive, and ferocious pedagogues." Now let the appeal be made to every reader, whether, if guilty of any atrocity, he would receive the infliction of physical pain from deliberate choice? The spontaneous answer which arises in his breast, however penitent he may be, is *No*. Well, if he receives it not from deliberate choice, he will feel a spirit of opposition, though perhaps not perceptible by others, and the cultivation of this feeling is but the nourishing and developing of one of the baser passions. Now let us look at its influence on the deceptive faculties. It is said that "children and fools always tell the truth." The adage should be amended thus, with regard to the former: Children always tell the truth, until by the indiscretion of their parents and teachers, they are indirectly taught to lie.

Let a scholar understand that disobedience is invariably followed by flagellation, at least as a dernier resort, and if he be naturally frolicsome, as most children are, the first thing that suggests itself to his mind, is, not the abandonment of his mistimed juvenile sports, but how he can best succeed in the practice of them and escape detection. Hence those furtive glances, hence that insidious eyeing of the teacher, hence that ultimate resort to every species of duplicity, from the half articulated evasion to the downright and boldly uttered untruth. Nothing is more natural for young children, acting from their generous impulses, and just commencing to appreciate the difference between right and wrong, than when they have done wrong to confess it, and immediately thereafter, nothing is more common than for an irascible, inconsiderate, and self-conceited parent or teacher to beat them "with many stripes," until statuary itself would faint weep.

2d. The infliction of corporal punishment does not produce its desired effects.

The attainment of two objects is attempted in its infliction.

1st. The securing of good order in school, which, with most teachers is a principal object.

And, 2d. The reformation of the aggressor.

Is the first effect produced? Let "stubborn facts" answer.

If the advocate of corporal punishment will subject himself to the trouble of examining the history of civil governments, he will find that those which have punished crime with the most corporal severity, have had a correspondingly enlarged criminal calendar. Extending his observations to parental governments, he will invariably discover, that those parents who inflict the most physical pain for obliquities in their children, have the most insubordinate families.—Most refractory children, get their incipient movement in the path of vice, from the misdirected corrections of their parents. Continuing his observations to schools, let him visit every one if he choose, in the entire state, and request the scholars of each that have not been punished during the term, to rise, and he will find to his disappointment, that in those schools where there is a unanimous rise, the best order obtains, and as a general thing, just in proportion to the number that are obliged to remain on their seats, do misrule and insubordination prevail. It is an irrevocable law of nature, enacted by Him

"with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning," that crime shall perpetuate punishment; and it is another law of nature, equally irrevocable, that the right kind of punishment, that which sends conviction, conversion and reformation to the offender, shall annihilate crime. Crime then perpetuates punishment, and nature's punishment annihilates crime. But corporal punishment perpetuates it, by arousing and developing, and exciting all the baser passions of the human breast. A gentleman of great experience in teaching, having charge of one of the best schools in the Union, says, "I do not choose to employ an antidote, which will only serve to increase the demand for it. I would rather diminish than augment the amount of my labor, and to whip a child once to-day for a misdemeanor, is but preparing him to merit two flagellations to-morrow." If the first effect be not produced, it is conclusive that the second, reformation, cannot be.

3d. Corporal punishment is a prolific source of dissensions in districts, and of dissatisfaction with teachers. Dissensions in school districts present barriers as insuperable to the salutary progression of the schools, as any thing of which we can conceive. It is a self-evident philosophical truth, that to remove any effect, whether disastrous or otherwise, we must first direct our attention to the exciting cause. Hence, the exciting causes of these dissensions, should be eagerly sought—attacked—and if possible vanquished. No one will contend, that a small scholar should be subjected to physical pain for infractions, and a large one excused. If at all, it should be *vice versa*. Now supposing a large scholar should designedly and wilfully, violate some of the regulations of the school, and the teacher resolves on the infliction of physical pain, as the necessary corrective. If he produce subjugation at all, which is exceedingly problematical, he is obliged to contuse the culprit, and "to inflict an amount, and an intensity of pain, which for the time being, converts him both in feeling and appearance into a demon.

4th. Admitting that it is allowable in parents, no teacher is or can be invested with the power which parents possess in this respect. Allusion is frequently made by the sticklers of physical tinglings, to the wise sayings of Solomon. As a biblical commentator I make no pretensions, but will reiterate the well known fact, that the Bible abounds with figurative language, and as we are told by learned expounders of it, the "Proverbs of Solomon" are exceedingly characterized by that kind of diction. Many of them are a duplication of two clauses, or verses, and a kind of antithesis, expressed in the strongest possible metaphors. To those that literally accord with our natural propensities, we are willing to attach a literal meaning, and to those which do not thus harmonize we choose to attach a figurative signification. Hence the two following are generally literally understood: "He that spareth the rod, hateth his son, but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." But no one will even pretend that the one which follows should be understood literally. "Put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite." Now it is no more probable, that Solomon intended to inculcate that a parent should literally apply a physical

rod to his wayward child, than it is that he inculcated suicide, by saying that a gormandizer should apply a knife to his own throat. The former proverbs are just as figurative as is the latter. We are told by commentators that the original word for which chaste stands, is frequently translated, instruct, or educate. Hence the wise man's figure is obvious. He that sparingly the rod of right instruction, he that neglects the training of "his child in the way he should go" hateth him, but he that loveth him chasteneth, instructeth, or educateth him betimes. Let it be conceded, however, that "he that spareth the rod," &c. with its kindred verses, should be literally understood, and then let the sayings of him who "spoke as never man spake" (even Solomon himself not excepted,) be placed in direct contradistinction. "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? till seven times? I say not unto thee until seven times, but until *seventy times seven*." The Saviour's examples corresponded invariably with his precepts, for when "he was reviled, he reviled not again;" when "he suffered, he threatened not;" and when ignominiously suspended and exposed to the physical tortures of human and diabolical invention, he ejaculated in accents of consummate benevolence, "Father forgive them." Never did he advocate the use of physical violence in the management of offenders, and never did he inculcate the principle which so completely accords with human inclinations and human frailties, viz.: "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."

5th. Corporal punishment should be abolished because there is a better way.

If "of two evils we should choose the less," of two ways we should choose the better, and be it the task of every teacher,

"To find that better way."

The prominent characteristics of human nature have always existed, not only in every age and clime, but in every individual; "as is the teacher so will be the school," therefore he has only to know his own feelings, his own propensities and his own frailties, in order to understand those of his pupils. Hence the importance of studying one's self.

"Know thou thyself, * * *
"The proper study of mankind is man."

The first thing teacher should attempt in commencing his school, is to secure the confidence of his pupils, for without this all his well timed, well intended, and well directed admonitions will become "as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." But to secure the confidence of pupils, the teacher must first confide in them; he must believe, and let them know he believes it, that they have so much respect for their teacher, their parents, and themselves, they perfectly contemn any disrespectful omission of duty or commission of acts. He, feeling thus, there will almost invariably be a reciprocity of feeling existing between him and his pupils, whereas if he is constantly suspecting and watching them, and dare not trust them out of his sight, he need expect nothing else than a reciprocation of the same feeling.

Let a sagacious teacher, saturated with the "milk of human kindness," take his wayward pupil alone, and call to his aid the great potency

of "moral suasion," and in ninety-nine cases of an hundred, he will melt and dissipate his pupils' obduracy, as is the hoar frost liquitated and evaporated by the vertical rays of an equatorial sun. Now if a teacher has secured the confidence of his pupils—if he is thoroughly qualified to teach whatever is required of him—if he always asks, instead of commanding his pupils—if he never manifests any peevishness by scolding and storming—if he never makes laws before they are necessary—if he makes the studies perfectly intelligible to his pupils—if he keeps them constantly amused and employed, and above all, if he administers reproof in the spirit of gentleness, kindness and love, and always in private if possible, and yet does not succeed in governing his school, what is to be done? In ninety-nine schools of an hundred he will succeed; and with ninety-nine scholars of an hundred of the hundredth school he will also succeed. But what must be done with the hundredth scholar of the hundredth school? An "extreme case." Resort to corporal punishment? No. He will make him "two-fold more the child" of *Diabolus* "than he was before;" for if fair, mild and judicious means will not subdue him, neither will he be permanently subdued, though he were beaten from head to foot, into physical callousness. Those scholars that are conquered through the instrumentality of the rod, are those that were perfectly retrievable by milder means. In these "extreme cases" let the teacher solicit the interference of the parents; request them to correct him for misdemeanors at school, and let them punish him corporeally if they please. If this means has not the desired effect, ask the trustees to expostulate with him, and as a dernier resort, expel him the school-house.

Thus I have endeavored to portray the evils of "corporal punishment as a means of school discipline," and have imperfectly suggested the remedy. Now in conclusion, I wish to enforce upon teachers the necessity of their studying thoroughly the work entitled "The School and the Schoolmaster." It is said if a person wishes to become a good prosaic writer, he must spend his days and nights in reading the works of Addison: in like manner, if a person wishes to become a good disciplinarian, and in every respect a good teacher, he must spend his days and nights in reading "The School and the School Master."

[Extract from the Report of Jas. HENRY, Co. Superintendent of Herkimer.]

The present age is remarkable for the boldness and universality with which it interrogates and examines all laws, customs, and usages of the past, and for the rapidity with which it pronounces its decrees of approval, or condemnation, on all institutions of former times. A question of much practical importance, in relation to the order and discipline of schools, is now dividing the opinions, and eliciting the discussions of great numbers of virtuous and enlightened men, who are nobly engaged in promoting a general and thorough reformation in the system of public instruction; that question is, whether corporal punishment is a necessary part of school discipline. On one hand, it is asserted that the use of the rod, in any case whatever, is brutal and degrading to both teacher and pupil; that there can never be found an instance in which

corporal punishment is necessary or even justifiable; that the very idea of influencing intellectual and moral action, by means of coercion and physical suffering, is a relic of barbarism which has been transmitted to us from the dark ages. On the other hand, it is maintained that it is indispensably necessary to the salutary discipline of families, schools, and to society itself; that the power to inflict corporal punishment, in certain cases, should be possessed by parents, teachers, and civil magistrates, and that without the existence of this power, in the present state of virtue and intelligence, order in any department of civilized and social life, could not be preserved for a single hour.

To determine which of these two opposite opinions is conformable to reason and to right, will be the object of a few moments' inquiry.

Were human beings of every age and condition generally well informed and virtuous, no sufficient reason could be assigned for imposing any restraints upon their liberty of action; and were they universally rational and moral, they would need no other mode of government than that which they would voluntarily institute for themselves, by their prompt obedience to the principles of reason and morality. But by common consent, men, even in the most enlightened and cultivated states of society, are not thus generally intelligent, reasonable and moral; and other means for establishing order, without which society could not exist, have necessarily been resorted to. A law to be universally obeyed must have means of enforcement which can be apprehended and felt by all. While intelligence, reason and virtue, are obeyed, as has been seen, but by a part of mankind, the senses exert a perpetual influence over all; through the senses, therefore, must the observance of the law be enforced upon all who are not sufficiently enlightened and virtuous to obey it from principles of reason and morality. It is, therefore, a fundamental and universal principle of government, that, until the principles of intelligence, reason, and morality are so far developed and brought into activity as to become of controlling influence, order must be enforced by an appeal to physical pleasures and pains. On this principle exclusively, to a certain extent, the authority of the parent over the child is founded; until a certain age, all appeals to reason and morality, on the part of the parent, are wholly inoperative upon the conduct of the child, and for the very good and sufficient reason that both the principles of reason and morality, and the obligation to obey them, are necessarily unknown to the child. It is true that this power to inflict physical pain may be, and often has been abused; but it is believed, few would have the boldness to propose, for the purpose of restraining the abuse, the abolition of the power itself. But it will be said that the power of the parent to inflict corporal punishment has never been denied, or even questioned. Let this be granted then, and it is confidently believed that it will be no difficult task to prove that the very same power, and for the very same reason, is invested in the teacher.

The office of a teacher is a parental one. The object of its institution was to perform a part of the parental duty, for the obligation on the parent to educate the child, is not less imperative than to provide food and clothing. If therefore

the teacher is to co-operate with the parent, or to use the better and more definite language of the law, if the teacher for certain purposes, is, "in the place of the parent," it necessarily follows that he must, for those purposes, be invested with the authority and power of the parent. If the infliction of corporal punishment upon the child is justifiable on the part of the parent by reason of the child's inability to be influenced and controlled by the principles of reason and morality, will it be for one moment contended that the child's character is so essentially modified and changed, simply by entering a school-room, that a mode of discipline indispensably necessary to order while in the parent's charge, becomes barbarous and absurd when the very same reason requires it for the preservation of order in the school? But teachers cannot know the character of the child as the parent knows it, they do not comprehend its feelings, they lack a parents' patience, sympathy, and judgment. If all this is true, what a farce does it make of the whole school system. If teachers are thus inferior to parents in the necessary qualifications for forming aright the character of the child, why are they employed at all? Suppose the teacher divested of the power to inflict corporal punishment, and suppose instances to occur in which all appeals to the reason and moral feeling of the pupil shall prove wholly ineffectual, how shall order be maintained and the performance of duty enforced? Must the teacher make a written complaint to the parent? There are thousands of cases in which the parent would believe the statements of the child in opposition to all that the teacher could speak or write. Shall the refractory pupil be reported to the town superintendent? Then that officer must grant that pupil and his friends a fair hearing before he can decide upon his conduct with justice. This mode of preserving order would be found in practice altogether too dilatory and expensive. Shall the idle and disobedient be summarily dismissed from the school? Hundreds and thousands of ignorant children would delight above all things in such a mode of discipline. Is it not wiser, rather than encounter these and other difficulties by no means imaginary, which would be consequent upon abolition of the teacher's power to inflict reasonable corporal punishment, to continue that mode of discipline to which we have been so long accustomed? Is it not better to say to the teacher, for certain purposes in relation to the children of your school, you are to occupy a parent's place, and for those purposes you are invested with a parent's authority. The law will sustain you in its proper exercise, but will hold you strictly responsible for its abuse?

When the time arrives in which the child shall competently understand and obey the principles of reason and morality, and shall be guided simply by those principles into the punctual performance of his whole duty, then may the power of corporal punishment be abolished with safety and for the general good. But until that time does arrive, it is confidently believed that the best good of the child, and the preservation of order in the family, in the school, and in society at large, imperatively demand the continuance and proper exercise of this power on the part of parents and teachers.

The views here expressed are supposed to be in perfect accordance with the teachings of the Inspired Volume, and they are known to be strictly in harmony with the laws of all civilized nations and the general experience of mankind. It is cheerfully conceded that well informed and good men hold and express opinions precisely opposite to those here advocated, but it is possible that even such men may entertain and propagate error. Good men not unfrequently, though unconsciously, deceive themselves by supposing that all other persons are like themselves in their motives and actions. Every man measures the character of his fellow by his own. Hence the strictly honest are always slow to believe in the existence of obliquity and fraud, and the knave is equally slow to admit the possibility of honesty and fair dealing. The best of men, however, have just reason to distrust the correctness of their opinions, however ardently and honestly entertained, if on examination they are found to be in opposition to the doctrines of the Bible, and the general experience of mankind.

COMMUNICATIONS.

[For the District School Journal.]

GREENE COUNTY.

DEAR SIR—Having just closed my official tour through the county, perhaps it will not be improper for me to make known through the medium of the Journal, the result of my labors. I have visited one hundred and thirty district schools; being the whole number in operation at the time of my visitation. Thus far, my visits have been received with the utmost cordiality. The opposition to the office of County Superintendent, that formerly existed, has nearly subsided; and judging from the present state of feeling that seems to prevail generally throughout the county in reference to common schools, the efforts now making in their behalf are, with few exceptions, universally approved. I found the majority of the schools in good condition. Some are of the first order; not inferior to the private schools and academies in their vicinity, either in point of discipline or instruction. There are ladies and gentlemen engaged the present season in the business of teaching, whose highest ambition in the literary world seems to be, to acquire the reputation of good school teachers. Wherever I found teachers of this description, I saw developed the elements of a good school. The first law of Heaven was depicted in every countenance, in every movement, and in every action; and a most thorough system of instruction carried out in every department of the school. They have a time and place for every thing, and do every thing at its proper and appointed time. One subject only is suffered to engross their attention at a time, and that is thoroughly investigated and gone through with, before another is introduced. Could instruction in all our schools thus be reduced to a system, the difficult and laborious task of teaching a school properly, would be greatly facilitated, and the most signal success would crown the efforts of those whose business is, to mould and discipline the minds of the rising generation.

Of this class of teachers, there are comparatively few to be found in the county. Many of the schools I visited, scarcely deserved the name of schools: and the time of many teachers who had been permitted to enter the school-room in that capacity, might be profitably employed in improving their education in a common school for some time to come. There are others whose literary acquirements may be considered respectable, but who have not an aptness to teach. Or, in other words, they lack in judgment in adapting their instructions to the capacities and understandings of children. They are incapable of analyzing a subject and exhibiting its parts separately. The minds of their pupils are not trained to habits of thought and reflection. Mere isolated facts are substituted for ideas. In short, the whole course of instruction is devoid of interest to the scholars, and ill adapted to develop and strengthen the intellectual powers.

Another fault in teachers is, they are not thorough in imparting instruction. Children are advanced too fast in their studies. Long and hurried recitations are encouraged. Lessons are usually recited from the book, without any explanations from the teacher to the scholars, or any illustration given of the exercise; and the scholar leaves the teacher without receiving any real benefit from the recitation. There may be a great deal of labor performed in schools where this course of instruction is pursued, yet there is no progress. No permanent impressions are made upon the minds of pupils; and their understandings remain unimproved. Often children are put into studies that are beyond their capacities; and not being able to comprehend the subject of their lessons, they become discouraged, and their relish for learning is turned into utter dislike. I have found scholars the past winter, who were pursuing philosophy, chemistry, and the higher branches of mathematics, who could not bound their own state, or even their own town, read intelligibly, or spell correctly. In those schools, orthography was almost wholly neglected; the scholars were permitted to pass over the syllables of words when spelling, without pronouncing them separately, or even pronouncing the word after they had spelled it. As a matter of course, I found the same schools backward in reading. This exercise is too much neglected in nearly all our schools. Its importance is not properly appreciated by most teachers. A dull, monotonous manner of reading, is tolerated in their schools. If their pupils read rapidly, and speak their words distinctly, they are pronounced good readers. No attention is paid to emphasis, accent, or inflections. The ideas the author intends to convey are wholly disregarded, and little or no interest is taken in the exercise. To read, is the most disagreeable task the pupil has to perform. He looks upon it, as being almost insupportable; and when he has performed it, a heavy sigh indicates that burden almost intolerable is removed. Inquire of the pupil what subject he has read about? and he cannot give a single idea. Not the least possible benefit is derived from the exercise. Scholars should be taught to read their lessons understandingly. If time is wanting, they should read less, and read it thoroughly, and then give the author's meaning in their own lan-

guage. If this course is adopted, the exercise cannot fail of eliciting thought and interest.

Another obstacle in the way of improvement in our schools is, there is a want of interest on the part of the patrons of common schools. This indifference is manifested in various ways: in employing cheap and incompetent teachers; in permitting their children to be irregular in their attendance; in neglecting to repair their school-houses; in not visiting their schools. One or more of these practices prevail to a greater or less extent in every school district I have visited. They are among the most formidable evils we have to contend with; and so long as they are suffered to obstruct the progress of instruction in our common schools, the incalculable blessings they are designed to secure to the rising generation will not be realized.

Yours truly, J. OLNEY,
County Supt. of Com. Schools.
Windham, March 29, 1844.

COMMON SCHOOL CELEBRATION.

HON. SAMUEL YOUNG,

Sir:—I take the liberty to forward you here-with, two Cortland papers, giving accounts of the convocations or celebrations which I have called together, since my return from Albany. You have received, through Mr. Randall, the accounts of the preceding ones. There is but one yet unpublished, that of Cortlandville, which in point of numbers far exceeded all the rest. I will forward that as soon as possible.

Strange as it may seem to you, sir, these meetings have encountered bitter opposition. In several of the towns, the *town superintendents* thought it best not to make the attempt—were quite certain they would fail! I expressed to them all my determination to hold such a meeting in each town at all hazards. You will see the result. As the first trial of an experiment, utterly new in this county, and regarded with dread and distrust by many of the teachers and schools, I think you will be disposed to regard it as a not unsuccessful one. These meetings have aroused a singular degree of spirit and excitement in the schools; and the same feeling has spread among parents. The dissenters and opposers have been swept away and overwhelmed by a perfect torrent of popular enthusiasm. I wish, sir, you could have witnessed the spectacle at Homer and Cortlandville; the whole streets filled with processions, banners, huge and beautifully decorated vehicles. Some schools preceded by bands of music—others, singing hymns and odes—bells pealing—and, occasionally, a deep and heart-felt shout bursting from the congregated multitude! The spectacle in the churches was gay and animating beyond description. Until the exercises commenced, each was like a dense forest of banners—almost hiding the sparkling faces underneath. The churches, where not occupied by schools, were crowded with the parents and friends of the scholars, some smiling—not a few weeping outright for joy! The enthusiasm of both old and young knew no bounds. Perhaps, sir, it would have been more delicate in me, to have suppressed the incident in relation to the presentation of the banner, at Homer. But I did not well see how I could, without exhibiting a false modesty, so long as the incident was so

notorious, and was made to constitute so marked a feature in the ceremonies of the occasion. When the church shook under the deep cheers which burst forth as the banner was unfurled, I could not but think, sir, of the suggestion which I presumed to hazard in my last report to the Department, in relation to a personal visitation to county conventions of schools, by the State Superintendent. If we may estimate the feeling and enthusiasm which it would call forth among our schools and people, by that produced by it in a minor sphere, by a minor official, it would be difficult to say where it would end—to what extent it would not reach. I propose to hold similar meetings the ensuing summer, and had we a building large enough in the country to hold five or six thousand children, I should take the liberty to write you to be present.

I have the honor to remain, sir,

Your obedient servant,

HENRY S. RANDALL.

EDUCATION IN EUROPE.

[Extract from the last Report of Hon. HORACE MANN.]

SCOTCH SCHOOLS.

THERE are some points in which the schools of Scotland are very remarkable. In the thoroughness with which they teach the *intellectual* part of reading, they furnish a model worthy of being copied by the world. Not only is the meaning of all the important words in the lesson clearly brought out, but the whole class or family of words, to which the principal word belongs, are introduced, and their signification given. The pupil not only gains a knowledge of the meaning of all the leading words contained in his exercise, but also of their roots, derivatives, and compounds; and thus is prepared to make the proper discriminations between analogous words whenever he may hear or read them on future occasions. For instance, suppose the word 'circumscribe' occurs in the lesson; the teacher asks from what Latin words it is derived, and being answered, he then asks what other English words are formed by the help of the Latin preposition 'circum.' This leads to an explanation of such words as *circumspect*, *circumvent*, *circumjacent*, *circumambient*, *circumference*, *circumflex*, *circumfusion*, *circumvarigate*, *circumstance*, *circumlocution*, &c. &c. The same thing would then be done in reference to the other etymological component of 'circumscribe,' viz.: 'scribo'; and here the specific meaning of the words *describe*, *inscribe*, *transcribe*, *ascibe*, *prescribe*, *superscribe*, *subscribe*, &c., &c., would be given. After this might come the nouns, adjectives, and adverbs, into which this word enters as one of the elements, such as *scripture*, *manuscript*, &c. The teacher says, Give me a word, which signifies to copy. *Pupils*: Transcribe. *T.* To write in a book, or on a tablet. *P.* Inscribe. *T.* To write upon, or on the outside of, as on a letter. *P.* Superscribe. *T.* To write beneath, or under. *P.* Subscribe. *T.* A man goes around to obtain names for a book or newspaper; or to get promises of money for stocks or for charity. What does he want? *P.* Subscriptions. *T.* And what are those called who give him their names? *P.* Subscribers. *T.* And what is a copy called? *P.* Transcription.

T. Or by way of abbreviation? *P.* Transcript. The same is done when a derivative of the Latin word 'pes' occurs, as in the words, 'imperiment, pedestal, pediment, impede, expedite; or of the word 'duco,' in *induce*, *produce*, *traduce*, *reduce*, *adduce*, *conduce*, *inducement*, *induction*, *deduction*, *reduction*, *production*; and then the names of the agents or persons performing these several acts are given.

So of the words in which the Greek 'grapho' is an element, as *geography*, *chirography*, *graphic*, *paragraph*, *telegraph*, *graphite*, (a mineral,) &c.

The same exercises take place in regard to hundreds of other words.

The Scotch teachers, the great body of whom are graduates of college, or have attended the university before beginning to keep school, are perfectly competent to instruct in this thorough manner. I think it obvious, however, that this mode of teaching may be carried too far, as many of our words, though wholly or in part of Latin or Greek derivation, have lost their etymological signification, and assumed a conventional one.

But all this,—admirable in its way,—was hardly worthy to be mentioned in comparison with another characteristic of the Scottish schools, viz. the mental activity with which the exercises were conducted, both on the part of teacher and pupils. I entirely despair of exciting in any other person, by a description, the vivid impressions of mental activity or celerity, which the daily operations of these schools produced in my own mind. Actual observation alone can give any thing approaching to the true idea. I do not exaggerate when I say that the most active and lively schools I have ever seen in the United States, must be regarded almost as dormitories, if compared with the servid life of the Scotch schools; and, by the side of theirs, our pupils would seem to be hibernating animals just emerging from their torpid state, and as yet but half conscious of the possession of life and faculties. It is certainly within bounds to say, that there are six times as many questions put and answers given, in the same space of time, as I ever heard put and given in any school in our own country.

But a few preliminary observations are necessary to make any description of a Scotch school intelligible.

In the numerous Scotch schools which I saw, the custom of place-taking prevailed, not merely in spelling, but in geography, arithmetic, reading, defining, &c. Nor did this consist solely in the passing up of the one giving a right answer above the one giving a wrong. But if a scholar made a very bright answer, he was promoted at once to the top of the class; if he made a very stupid one, he was sentenced no less summarily to the bottom. Periodically prizes are given, and the fact of having been 'Dux,' (that is, at the head of the class,) the greatest number of times, is the principal ground on which the prizes are awarded. In some schools an auxiliary stimulus is applied. The fact of having passed up sq many places, (say ten or twelve,) entitles the pupil to a ticket; and a given number of these tickets is equivalent to being 'dux' once. When this sharper goad to emulation is to be applied, the spectator will see the teacher fill his hand with small bits of pasteboard, and, as the recitation goes on and competition becomes

keen, and places are rapidly lost and won, the teacher is seen occasionally to give one of these tickets to a pupil as a counter, or token, that he has passed up above so many of his fellows ; —that is, he may have passed up above four at one time, six at another, and two at another,— and if twelve is the number which entitles to a ticket, one will be given without any stopping or speaking,—for the teacher and pupil appear to have kept a silent reckoning, and when the latter extends his hand, the former gives a ticket without any suspension of the lesson. This gives the greatest intensity to competition ; and at such times, the children have a look of almost maniacal eagerness and anxiety.

I have said that questions were put by the teacher with a rapidity almost incredible. When once put, however, if not answered, they are not again stated in words. If the first pupil cannot answer, the teacher rarely stops to say 'Next,' but,—every pupil having his eye on the teacher, and being alive in every sense and faculty, and the teacher walking up and down before the class, and gesticulating vehemently,—with his arm extended, and accompanying each motion with his eye, he points to the next, and the next, until perhaps, if the question is difficult, he may have indicated each one in a section, but obtained an answer from none ; then he throws his arm and eye around towards one side of the room, inviting a reply from any one, and, if still unsuccessful, he sweeps them across the other side, and all this will take but half a minute. Words being too slow and cumbrous, the language of signs prevails ; and the parties, being all eye and ear, the interchange of ideas has an electric rapidity. While the teacher turns his face and points his finger towards a dozen pupils consecutively, inviting a reply, perhaps a dozen arms will be extended towards him from other sections of the class, giving notice that they are ready to respond ; and in this way a question will be put to a class of fifty, sixty, or eighty pupils, in half a minute of time.

Now is this all. The teacher does not stand immovably fixed to one spot, (I never saw a teacher in Scotland sitting in a school-room,) nor are the bodies of the pupils mere blocks, resting motionless in their seats, or lolling from side to side as though life were deserting them. The custom is for each pupil to rise when giving an answer. This is ordinarily done so quick, that the body of the pupil, darting from the sitting into the standing posture, and then falling back into the first position, seems more like an instrument sent suddenly forwards by a mechanical force and then rapidly withdrawn, than like the rising and sitting of a person in the ordinary way. But it is obvious that the scene becomes full of animation when,—leave being given to a whole division of a class to answer,—dozen or twenty at once spring to their feet, and ejaculate at the top of their voices. The moment it is seen that the question has been rightly answered, and this is instantaneously shown by the manner of the teacher, all fall back, and another question is put. If this is not answered, almost before an attentive spectator can understand it, the teacher extends his arm and flashes his eye to the next, and the next, and so on, and when a rapid signal is given to another side of the room, a dozen pupils leap to the floor and vociferate a reply.

Nor can the faintest picture of these exciting scenes be given, without introducing something of the technical phraseology used in the school.

If the pupil is not prompt at the moment, and if the teacher means to insist upon an answer from him, (for it will not do to pass by a scholar always, however dull,) he exclaims in no very moderate or gentle voice, 'come away,' or 'Come away, now ;'—and if the first does not answer and the next does, he directs the latter to pass above the former by the conventional phrase, 'Take him down.' If a whole section stands at fault, for a moment, and then one leaps up and shouts out the reply, the teacher exclaims, 'Dux boy,' which means that the one who answered shall take the head of the class.

Suppose the teacher to be hearing his class in a reading lesson, and that the word 'impediment' occurs, something like the following scene may take place.

Teacher. 'Impediment,' from what Latin words?

Pupil. In and pes.

T. What does it mean ?

P. To oppose something against the feet,—to keep them back.

T. How is the word 'pes' used in statuary ?

P. In pedestal,—the block on which a statue is raised.

T. In architecture ?

P. Pediment.

T. In music ?

P. Pedal, a part of an organ moved by the feet.

T. In botany ?

P. Pedicle, or footstalk of a flower.

T. Give me a verb.

P. Impede.

T. A noun.

P. Impediment.

T. An adjective, which imports despatch in the absence of obstacles.

P. Expedient.

T. An adjective, meaning desirable or conducive.

P. (Hesitates.) *T.* Come away. (To the next.) Come away. (He now points to half a dozen in succession, giving to each not more than a twinkling of time.)

Ninth pupil. Expedient.

T. Take 'em down. (This pupil then goes above eight.)

All this does not occupy half the time in the class that it takes to read an account of it.

In a school where a recitation in Latin was going on, I witnessed a scene of this kind ; the room, unlike the rooms where the children of the common people are taught, was large. Seventy or eighty boys sat on deskless, backless benches, arranged on three sides of a square or parallelogram. A boy is now called upon to recite,—to parse a Latin noun for instance. But he does not respond quite so quickly as the report of a gun follows the flash. The teacher cries out 'Come away.' The boy errs, giving perhaps a wrong gender, or saying that it is derived from a Greek verb, when, in fact, it is derived from a Greek noun of the same family. Twenty boys leap forward into the area,—as though the house were on fire, or a mine or an ambush had been sprung upon them,—and shout out the true answer in a voice that could be heard forty rods. And so the recitation proceeds for an hour.

To an unaccustomed spectator, on entering one of these rooms, all seems uproar, turbulence, and the contention of angry voices,—the teacher traversing the space before his class, in a state of high excitement, the pupils springing from their seats, darting to the middle of the floor, and sometimes, with extended arms, forming a circle around him, two, three, or four deep,—every finger quivering from the intensity of their emotions,—until some more sagacious mind, outstripping its rivals, solves the difficulty,—when all are in their seats again, as though by magic, and ready for another encounter of wits.

I have seen a school kept for two hours in succession, in this state of intense mental activity, with nothing more than an alternation of subjects during the time, or perhaps the relaxation of singing. At the end of the recitation, both teacher and pupils would glow with heat, and be covered with perspiration, as though they had been contending in the race or the ring. It would be utterly impossible for the children to bear such fiery excitement, if the physical exercise were not as violent as the mental is intense. But children who actually leap into the air from the energy of their impulses, and repeat this as often as once in two minutes on an average, will not suffer from suppressed activity of the muscular system.

The mental labor performed in a given period in these schools, by children under the age of twelve or fourteen years, is certainly many times more than any I have ever seen in any schools of our own, composed of children as young. With us, the lower classes do not ordinarily work more than half the time while they are in the school room. Even many members of the reciting classes are drowsy and listless, and evidently following some train of thought,—if they are thinking at all,—whose scene lies beyond the walls of the school-house, rather than applying their minds to the subject-matter of the lesson, or listening to those who are reciting, or feigning to recite it. But in the mode above described, there is no sleepiness, no drowsing, no inattention. The moment an eye wanders, or a countenance becomes listless, it is roused by a special appeal; and the contagion of the excitement is so great as to operate upon every mind and frame that is not an absolute non-conductor to life.

One sees at a glance, how familiar the teacher, who teaches in this way, must be with the whole subject, in order to command the attention of a class at all.

I was told by the Queen's Inspector of the schools in Scotland, that the first test of a teacher's qualification is, his power to excite and sustain the attention of his class. If a teacher cannot do this, he is pronounced, without further inquiry, incompetent to teach.

There are some good schools in England, such as the Normal School at Battersea, those of the Home and Colonial Infant School Society, and the Borough Road School, in London, and some others; but, as I saw nothing in these superior to what may be seen in good schools at home, I omit all remarks upon them.*

*The famous school at Norwood,—eight or ten miles from London,—where more than a thousand of the pauper children of London are collected is an extraordinary sight, without being an extraordinary school.

SCHOOLS OF PRUSSIA AND SAXONY.

On reviewing a period of six weeks, the greater part of which I spent in visiting schools in the north and middle of Prussia and in Saxony, (excepting, of course, the time occupied in going from place to place,) entering the schools to hear the first recitation in the morning, and remaining until the last was completed at night, I call to mind three things about which I cannot be mistaken. In some of my opinions and inferences, I may have erred, but of the following facts, there can be no doubt:—

1. During all this time, I never saw a teacher hearing a lesson of any kind, (excepting a reading or spelling lesson,) *with a book in his hand*.

2. I never saw a teacher *sitting*, while hearing a recitation.

3. Though I saw hundreds of schools, and thousands,—I think I may say, within bounds, tens of thousands of pupils,—*I never saw one child undergoing punishment, or arraigned for misconduct. I never saw one child in tears from having been punished, or from fear of being punished.*

During the above period, I witnessed exercises in geography, ancient and modern; in the German language; from the explanation of the simplest words up to belles-lettres, disquisitions, with rules for speaking and writing; in arithmetic, algebra, geometry, surveying and trigonometry; in book-keeping; in civil history, ancient and modern; in natural philosophy; in botany and zoology; in mineralogy, where there were hundreds of specimens; in the endless variety of the exercises in thinking; knowledge of nature, of the world, and of society; in Bible history and in Bible knowledge;—and, as I before said, in no one of these cases did I see a teacher with a book in his hand. His book,—his books,—his library, was in his head. Promptly, without pause, without hesitation, from the rich resources of his own mind, he brought forth whatever the occasion demanded. I remember calling one morning at a country school in Saxony, where every thing about the premises, and the appearance both of teacher and children, indicated very narrow pecuniary circumstances. As I entered, the teacher was just ready to commence a lesson or lecture on French history. He gave not only the events of a particular period in the history of France, but mentioned as he proceeded all the contemporary sovereigns of neighboring nations. The ordinary time for a lesson, here as elsewhere, was an hour. This was somewhat longer, for towards the close, the teacher entered upon a train of thought from which it was difficult to break off, and rose to a strain of eloquence which it was delightful to hear. The scholars were all absorbed in attention. They had paper, pen and ink before them, and took brief notes of what was said. When the lesson touched upon contemporary events in other nations,—which, as I suppose, had been the subject of previous lessons,—the pupils were questioned concerning them. A small text-book of history was used by the pupils, which they studied at home.

I ought to say further, that I generally visited schools without guide, or letter of introduction, presenting myself at the door, and asking the favor of admission. Though I had a general order from the Minister of Public Instruction,

commanding all schools, gymnasia and universities in the kingdom to be opened for my inspection, yet I seldom exhibited it, or spoke of it,—at least not until I was about departing. I preferred to enter as a private individual, and uncommended visitor.

I have said that I saw no teacher sitting in his school. Aged or young, all stood. Nor did they stand apart and aloof in sullen dignity.—They mingled with their pupils, passing rapidly from one side of the class to the other, animating, encouraging, sympathizing, breathing life into less active natures, assuring the timid, distributing encouragement and endearment to all. The looks of the Prussian teacher often have the expression and vivacity of an actor in a play. He gesticulates like an orator. His body assumes all the attitudes, and his face puts on all the variety of expression, which a public speaker would do, if haranguing a large assembly on a topic vital to their interests.

It may seem singular, and perhaps to some almost ludicrous, that a teacher, in expounding the first rudiments of hand-writing, in teaching the difference between a hair-stroke and a ground stroke, or how an *l* may be turned into a *b*, or a *u* into a *w*, should be able to work himself up into an oratorical fervor, should attitudinize, and gesticulate, and stride from one end of the class to the other, and appear in every way to be as intensely engaged as an advocate when arguing an important cause to a jury;—but strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true; and before five minutes of such a lesson had elapsed, I have seen the children wrought up to an excitement proportionally intense, hanging upon the teacher's lips, catching every word he says, and evincing great elation or depression of spirits, as they had or had not succeeded in following his instructions. So I have seen the same rhetorical vehemence on the part of the teacher, and the same interest and animation on the part of the pupils, during a lesson on the original sounds of the letters,—that is, the difference between the long and the short sound of a vowel, or the different ways of opening the mouth in sounding the consonants *b* and *p*. This zeal of the teacher enkindles the scholars. He charges them with his own electricity to the point of explosion. Such a teacher has no idle, mischievous, whispering children around him, nor any occasion for the rod. He does not make desolation of all the active and playful impulses of childhood, and call it peace; nor, to secure stillness among his scholars, does he find it necessary to ride them with the night-mare of fear. I rarely saw a teacher put questions with his lips alone. He seems so much interested in his subject, (though he might have been teaching the same lesson for the hundredth or the five hundredth time,) that his whole body is in motion;—eyes, arms, limbs, all contributing to the impression he desires to make; and at the end of an hour, both he and his pupils come from the work all glowing with excitement.

Suppose a lawyer in one of our courts were to plead an important cause before a jury, but instead of standing and extemporizing, and showing by his gestures, and by the energy and ardor of his whole manner, that he felt an interest in his theme, instead of rising with his subject and coruscating with flashes of genius and wit, he should plant himself lazily down in

a chair, read from some old book which scarcely a member of the panel could fully understand, and after droning away for an hour should leave them, without having distinctly impressed their minds with one fact, or led them to form one logical conclusion; would it be any wonder if he left half of them joking with each other, or asleep;—would it be any wonder,—provided he were followed on the other side by an advocate of brilliant parts, of elegant diction and attractive manner,—by one who should pour sunshine into the darkest recesses of the case,—if he lost not only his own reputation, but the cause of his client also.

These incitements and endearments of the teacher, this personal ubiquity, as it were, among all the pupils in the class, prevailed much more, as the pupils were younger. Before the older classes, the teacher's manner became calm and didactic. The habit of attention being once formed, nothing was left for subsequent years or teachers, but the easy task of maintaining it. Was there ever such a comment as this on the practice of hiring cheap teachers because the school is young, or incompetent ones because it is backward!

In Prussia and in Saxony, as well as in Scotland, the power of commanding and retaining the attention of a class is held to be a sine qua non in a teacher's qualifications. If he has not talent, skill, vivacity, or resources of anecdote and wit, sufficient to arouse and retain the attention of his pupils during the accustomed period of recitation, he is deemed to have mistaken his calling, and receives a significant hint to change his vocation.

Take a group of little children to a toy shop, and witness their out-bursting eagerness and delight. They need no stimulus of badges or prizes to arrest or sustain their attention; they need no quickening of their faculties by rod or ferule. To the exclusion of food and sleep, they will push their inquiries, until shape, color, quality, use, substance, both external and internal, of the objects, are exhausted; and each child will want the showman wholly to himself. But in all the boundless variety and beauty of nature's works; in that profusion and prodigality of charms with which the Creator has adorned and enriched every part of his creation; in the delights of affection; in the exultant joys of benevolence; in the absorbing interest which an unsophisticated conscience instinctively takes in all questions of right and wrong;—in all these, is there not as much to challenge and command the attention of a little child as in the curiosities of a toy shop? When as much of human art and ingenuity has been expended upon Teaching as upon Toys, there will be less difference between the cases.

The third circumstance I mentioned above was the beautiful relation of harmony and affection which subsisted between teacher and pupils. I cannot say that the extraordinary fact I have mentioned was not the result of chance or accident. Of the probability of that, others must judge. I can only say that, during all the time mentioned, I never saw a blow struck, I never heard a sharp rebuke given, I never saw a child in tears, nor arraigned at the teacher's bar for any alleged misconduct. On the contrary, the relation seemed to be one of duty first, and then affection, on the part of the teacher,—of

affection first, and then duty on the part of the scholar. The teacher's manner was better than parental, for it had a parent's tenderness and vigilance, without the foolish doings or indulgencies to which parental affection is prone. I heard no child ridiculed, sneered at, or scolded, for making a mistake. On the contrary, whenever a mistake was made, or there was a want of promptness in giving a reply, the expression of the teacher was that of grief and disappointment, as though there had been a failure, not merely to answer the question of a master, but to comply with the expectations of a friend. No child was disconcerted, disabled, or bereft of his senses, through fear. Nay, generally, at the ends of the answers, the teacher's practice is to encourage him, with the exclamation 'good,' 'right,' 'wholly right,' &c., or to check him with his slowly and painfully articulated 'no'; and this is done with a tone of voice that marks every degree of *plus* and *minus* in the scale of approbation or regret. When a difficult question has been put to a young child, which tasks all his energies, the teacher approaches him with a look of mingled concern and encouragement; he stands before him, the light and shade of hope and fear alternately crossing his countenance; he lifts his arms and turns his body,—as a bowler who has given a wrong direction to his bowl will writhe his person to bring the ball back upon its track;—and finally, if the little wrestler with difficulty triumphs, the teacher felicitates him upon his success, perhaps seizes and shakes him by the hand, in token of congratulation; and, when the difficulty has been really formidable, and the effort triumphant, I have seen the teacher catch up the child in his arms and embrace him, as though he were not able to contain his joy. At another time, I have seen a teacher actually clap his hands with delight at a bright reply: and all this has been done so naturally and so unaffectedly as to excite no other feeling in the residue of the children than a desire, by the same means, to win the same caresses. What person worthy of being called by the name, or of sustaining the sacred relation of a parent, would not give any thing, bear any thing, sacrifice any thing, to have his children, during eight or ten years of the period of their childhood, surrounded by circumstances, and breathed upon by sweet and humanizing influences, like these!

I mean no disparagement of our own teachers by the remark I am about to make. As a general fact, these teachers are as good as public opinion has demanded; as good as the public sentiment has been disposed to appreciate; as good as public liberality has been ready to reward; as good as the preliminary measures taken to qualify them would authorize us to expect. But it was impossible to put down the questionings of my own mind,—whether a visitor could spend six weeks in our own schools without ever hearing an angry word spoken, or seeing a blow struck, or witnessing the flow of tears.

In the Prussian schools, I observed the fair operation and full result of two practices which I have dwelt upon with great repetition and urgency at home. One is, when hearing a class recite, always to ask the question before naming the scholar who is to give the answer. The question being first asked, all the children are

alert, for each one knows that he is liable to be called upon for the reply. On the contrary, if the scholar who is expected to answer is first named, and especially if the scholars are taken in succession, according to local position,—that is, in the order of their seats or stations,—then the attention of all the rest has a reprieve, until their turns shall come. In practice, this designation of the answerer before the question is propounded, operates as a temporary leave of absence, or furlough, to all the other members of the class.

The other point referred to, is that of adjusting the ease or difficulty of the questions to the capacity of the pupil. A child should never have any excuse or occasion for making a mistake; nay, at first he should be most carefully guarded from the fact, and especially from the consciousness of making a mistake. The questions should be ever so childishly simple, rather than that the answers should be erroneous. No expense of time can be too great, if it secures the habit and the desire of accuracy. Hence a false answer should be an event of the rarest occurrence,—one to be deprecated, to be looked upon with surprise and regret, and almost as an offence. Few things can have a worse effect upon a child's character than to set down a row of black marks against him, at the end of every lesson.

The value of this practice of adjusting questions to the capacities and previous attainments of the pupils, cannot be over-estimated. The opposite course *necessitates* mistakes, *habituates* and *hardens* the pupils to blundering and uncertainty, disparages the value of correctness in their eyes; and,—what is a consequence as much to be lamented as any,—gives plausibility to the argument in favor of emulation as a means of bringing children back to the habit of accuracy from which they have been driven. Would the trainer of horses deserve any compensation, or have any custom, if the first draughts which he should impose upon the young animals were beyond their ability to move?

The first of the above-named practices can be adopted by every teacher, immediately, and whatever his degree of competency in other respects may be. The last improvement can only be fully effected when the teacher can dispense with all text-books, and can teach and question from a full mind only. The case is hopeless, where a conspiracy against the spread of knowledge has been entered into between an author who compiles, and a teacher who uses, a text-book, in which the questions to be put are all prepared and printed.

EDUCATION IN GERMANY.

[Extract from the Letter of LEMUEL STEPHENS, Esq. to the Superintendent of Penn., dated Berlin, April 10, 1843.]

NORMAL SCHOOLS.

It may be doubted whether the education of young men in the seminaries is a sufficient security that they will afterwards continue to teach. The seminaries should receive only those who, in good faith, intend to do so; and I will add, that *their thorough and peculiar qualification will do more than any thing else to bind them to the employment*. In Prussia, Hanover,

Hesse, and probably in the other German states, those who avail themselves of the benefits of the seminaries are required to teach during the first three years, in any situation to which the government may appoint them; and in case of refusal, they must refund to the seminary an equivalent for their expenses to the institution, which, in Prussia, is fixed at twenty thalers, or about fourteen dollars per year, for the length of time they have studied there, together with the amount of such special beneficia as they may have enjoyed. Then further, as teachers, educated in the seminaries, are exempted from the military, except for the short term of six weeks, it is required that a teacher who is discharged from his office for misconduct, before his thirty-second year, or who, from choice, passes before this time to some other occupation, shall then be held to the discharge of the full term of military service. In Massachusetts, the young teacher obligates himself to teach a school three years after leaving the seminary. These constraints are just and good; but, as I said, the wisest constraint of all will be contained in the thorough and appropriate education afforded by the seminaries.

This leads me to remark, finally, that in the establishment of teachers' seminaries, their utility and success will depend entirely upon their appropriate and perfect organization. False economy has often attempted to provide for the education of primary teachers, by making the seminary an appendage to a high school, or an academy. Thirty years ago this arrangement was not uncommon in Germany; and later the experiment has been tried in the state of New-York. But, as might be seen, by this system the end desired is not attained. Supposing the teachers of such academies qualified to discharge the double duties of their station, they lack both the time and strength. There is a constant tendency to melt both departments into one, whereby either the seminary or the academy is extinguished. The elements of the two institutions are of too different a nature to admit of a union. A common discipline for both is seldom suitable—a common instruction, never. In those branches of instruction suitable to both, the teacher will find a thousand occasions to illustrate and explain the principles of method, and for remarks valuable to the pupils of the seminary, but which are entirely out of place to the pupils of the academy.

Besides, if the union of teachers' seminaries with academies has any object, the pupils of the seminary are received as beneficiaries, which is very apt to give rise to an odious distinction between them and the pupils of the academy. If this last may seem to be an evil which wisdom could avoid, experience has proved it powerful enough to introduce dissatisfaction and strife into such institutions, and put an end to the spirit of improvement. If it were needed, to strengthen the evidence of the inefficiency of this system, I might easily quote the testimony of the most able teachers of Germany to this effect. Perhaps no department of education requires a more peculiar treatment, and more calls for the undivided zeal and energy of those who have the conduct of it, than the preparation of teachers. According to the plan of educating teachers, prevalent, with some modifications, in Austria and Holland, the

young candidates are placed under the care of experienced established teachers, whom they assist in the management of their schools, beginning with the simplest duties, till they are qualified by observation and experience to take upon themselves the most difficult; and thus familiarize themselves completely with the methods and management of their masters. But this is the favorable side of the system—and Cousin in his report on the schools of Holland, passes no doubt a very just judgment, when he says: "by this system all faults once existing in the schools become firmly rooted, since the candidate blindly adopts the methods and peculiar notions of his teacher, to whom he trusts for every thing." A liberal and scientific education in his profession, and the habit of judging independently respecting principles, is not attained thereby.

Every thing depends on making the seminaries for teachers separate and independent establishments, with a careful provision for a thorough, theoretical and practical preparation for all the duties of the common school.

In the experiment of introducing teachers' seminaries into our country, there is a special danger from which much is to fear. It is the danger that we shall be too sparing in the number of teachers employed in conducting them. The teachers of our academies and high schools, too generally, are compelled to take upon themselves more labors than any man, whatever his education may have been, is able to perform well. The custom, probably, comes from the fact, that so many of our higher schools are private undertakings, where naturally strong reasons exist against multiplying the teachers. If an instructor hears, in one day, recitations of classes in every stage of advancement in the languages, in mathematics, in the natural sciences, and in philosophy, there can, of course, be no thought of previous preparation and actual teaching on his part. That the pupils properly repeat the language of the text-books can be his only care. To expect him to animate his instructions with a living spirit, and to awaken in his pupils the love and power of independent thought, the great true end of education, were most unreasonable; it is requiring him to impart to others what he cannot possess himself. The constant dissipation of his attention over the whole circle of sciences, not only makes his instructions in each, lifeless and fruitless; it also gradually, but fatally, destroys his own mind, by forbidding him ever to concentrate his mental energy upon any one subject of thought. If a teacher, from a higher sense of duty to his pupils, or a desire to save himself from intellectual bluntness, actually pursues, with heart and soul, the studies he professes to teach, the almost certain loss of health puts an untimely end to his usefulness. A prominent writer on education in America, recommends therefore, that when the teacher leaves the school-room, he leaves behind him all thought and care for the direct duties of his school, as the only way to preserve his health and spirits. This is too true, but it is a sad alternative of evils between which he has to choose, and an alternative which must be removed before our higher schools can answer the end desired, and which in other countries they have already attained. These remarks apply with peculiar force to

teachers' seminaries. There a double vigilance and zeal is necessary. The instruction and deportment of the teacher have a two-fold importance. His teaching is at the same time a pattern to his pupils, and dare not be left to the chance expedients and shifts of the moment. A school for practice is also to be carried on. Very much is to be accomplished in the shortest time. To quote an emphatical remark of Dr. Harisch: "Bad seminaries are very dangerous institutions."

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NEW-ORLEANS.

[Extracts from the Report of J. BALDWIN, President of the Council of the Second Municipality, for the year 1844.]

We have watched with deep interest, the enlightened and zealous efforts made by the Hon. J. Baldwin and a few kindred spirits, to diffuse the blessings of general education in this great commercial capital of the south. The extracts we have space to give, show some of the gratifying results of these labors, and the friends of this great cause will see with surprise that the Second Municipality of New Orleans now enjoys a system of public instruction, that approaches and even rivals some of the best municipal school organizations of the Union.

THE Council of Municipality No. 2, of the city of New-Orleans, in obedience to the requirements of an act entitled "An act to authorize the Municipalities of the city of New-Orleans to establish public schools therein," approved 14th of February, 1841, has the honor to submit its Second Annual Report of the condition of the funds entrusted to its care, accompanied by such remarks and observations as are deemed pertinent to public education.

Our schools cannot be expected to lay any claim to a high grade of excellence; for institutions less than two years old cannot have the maturity and strength of age. We only ask credit for what we have done, and what we have attempted. We shall feel encouraged to persevere if it can be perceived that we have entered the right course and steadily pursued it.

The lapse of another year, (even with a full and complete realization of every hope of the most zealous advocate and sanguine friend of the noble enterprise,) could not evidence any very striking success. The structure of education is reared gradually; like the riparian rights, its accretions are imperceptible; yet the results are obvious and gratifying, and fully equal to the expectations of the Council.

The interest manifested towards these public schools last year, still continues; the confidence of the community remains undiminished, and the friends and advocates of the great and laudable enterprise are still confident in their convictions, and zealous in their efforts to render them every thing hoped for.

More than one thousand additional names have been registered on the books of these useful seminaries of learning, during the year, making in the aggregate, since their first opening, two thousand

four hundred and forty-three. The whole attendance now, is one thousand one hundred and fifty-six.

In the private schools of this Municipality there are about four hundred!

When the last census was taken in 1840, there were 1,914 white persons between the ages of five and fifteen years, reported within the limits of this Municipality; add to which the probable increase of ten per cent per annum since, makes 2,487 as the probable number now; of which 1,156 belong to the public, and about 400 to the private schools, leaving 931 not in attendance in any school. This accession to the public, and diminution from the private schools, is believed the most conclusive evidence of the former's superiority; and moreover, further evidences with what facility prejudices, even the most deeply rooted, are dissipated by the force of truth and wisdom.

The ordinary expenses required to support these schools, during the fiscal year terminating with the month of May, is about \$18,000, viz: Principal superintendent's salary, \$2,500; 1 assistant, do. \$960; 1 do. \$840; 2 do. each \$800, \$1,600; 1 do. \$780; 1 do. \$720; 1 do. \$600; 1 do. \$40; 3 do. each \$500, \$1,500; 4 do. each \$420, \$1,680; 7 do. each \$360, \$2,520; house-rent, \$1,800; books and stationery, \$1,500; contingencies, \$460. Total, \$18,000.

Methods of education the most approved by enlightened experience have been resorted to, and sedulously employed to render the school-room pleasant, the scholars' task easy, their attendance more regular and punctual, and the acquisition of knowledge interesting and delightful.

Teachers and scholars are thus rendered attentive to their duties, and thereby ensures the greatest good to the greatest number, with the smallest means.

In several of the largest cities of our country, no better schools can be found than the public schools; and so they ever can and ought to be, if those who are capable of watching over and guarding their interests, will give them their aid.

It has, moreover, been a great benefit to the public schools, that our pupils are from families of every order and every occupation in the community; that they contain within their walls, the children of the richest as well as of the poorest. The surest way to destroy their usefulness, would be to countenance the idea that they are a public charity, designed only for the poor, and that the rich have no right to their privileges. They are to be regarded as a public charity, just as much as the institutions of government; just as much, for instance, as the courts of law, and no more.

There is no truth more obvious, than that a republican government, which from its very theory presupposes every man competent to take a part in carrying it on, should provide the means that he be competent.

In these public schools is carried out the beautiful idea of our republican institutions, that all are equal, and entitled to equal privileges.

Our government is eminently a popular one. The people are practically and theoretically sovereign. To their judgment is submitted for final arbitrament, every important question, and most complicated problem in political science—hence the necessity of thoroughly instructing them.

The system which obtained last year, of awarding books or medals for exemplary behavior and

proficiency in learning, has been discontinued after mature and deliberate consideration.

The distribution of rewards, wherever prevalent, is generally regarded as a means to excite the slothful and idle; to arouse the sleeping affections: but experience hath plainly indicated that the natural desire not to be outdone, excites a sufficiently keen and wholesome emulation.

The scholars are now induced to learn by other and more elevated and lasting incentives—the love of knowledge and the pleasure and advantages consequent upon its acquisition.

Their minds are like clay in the hands of the potter, easily moulded and fashioned after external objects. It is of great importance to keep this susceptibility within the parcellcs of good, motives and proper principles.

The object of pursuit ought to bear a just analogy with the struggle; but what is the value of a handsome book or more costly medal, compared with knowledge?

Substitute knowledge, then, as the object of hope or inducement, and you create a prize every way worthy the most intense intellectual effort.

The condition and character of these public schools, in which more than three-fourths of all the children of this Municipality are educated, is regarded by the Council as a matter of deep concernment to every good citizen.

Parents and guardians shall all feel there is no boon which they can bestow on their children so valuable as intelligence and virtue. These are the great pillars upon which not only the freedom and happiness of the coming generation rest, but upon which the patriot and statesman chiefly finds his hopes of the stability and perpetuity of our free and glorious institutions, and although the Council rejoices at the manifestations of an increased interest in them, by a more frequent and general visitation than formerly, still these visits have neither been as frequent or general as desired.

The beneficial influence of our public schools on the value of property within this Municipality is already apparent. Numerous families have, within the last year, located themselves here, solely with a view to educate their children in them. The great saving in the expense of education, enables them to pay a higher rent, and thus property-holders, who so largely contribute to their support, are indirectly benefited by them to an extent perhaps equal to their contributions. This consideration, although secondary to the more important one of the general diffusion of knowledge, is nevertheless well worthy of notice, as indicating that the success of our system of public schools, is identified with the pecuniary prosperity of the Municipality.

[For the Journal.]
READING BOOKS.

THAT a great and valuable improvement has been effected within a few years, in the reading books for juvenile classes, will be readily acknowledged by every individual who is at all conversant with the condition of our common schools. The books which were formerly in general use, and which are still used to some extent, were the English Reader, American Manual, American Preceptor, and Columbian Reader. Some of these are works of superior

merit, being composed of selections from the ablest authors, and replete with solid and useful instruction. But the subjects upon which they treated were too abstruse, and the language of too high an order, to be comprehended by over one-tenth of the whole number of scholars attending our schools; and hence the public mind became a wakened and convinced of the necessity of laying them aside, and substituting others, better adapted to the tastes and capacities of young minds. Accordingly, we have now thrown before us, a lengthy catalogue of *juvenile reading books*, many of which are well calculated to please and entertain children, and greatly to facilitate the acquisition of the art of reading. But the idea has often suggested itself to my mind, that the authors of these works, or at least of a great portion of them, while they have unweariedly put forth their best efforts to remove many of the obstacles from the path of childhood, and to alleviate the hitherto tedious and irksome process of *learning to read*, have committed still another error, more deleterious, I fear, in its tendency, than most of us would at first imagine; and that is, the great amount of *fictional* matter which is thrown before the children for their daily reading tasks. I must confess that my mind was never fully awakened to this subject, until suggested by an experienced teacher, Mr. Cyrus Graves, of the town of Palermo, about one year and a half since; since which time it has been the subject of much reflection, until I have found myself a decided convert to his sentiment, "that nothing but truth—solid and substantial *truth*, should ever be laid before the mind of a child."

I have not room in a short communication to go into detail, and definitely point out the particular chapters in these several works which are objectionable, but I will name a few. For instance, in Sanders' Second Book, page 12, we find the story of the "Crow and the Dove." This lesson has a good moral attached to it, and the instruction which it is intended to convey, is of a salutary nature. But when the child reads this, is he not instinctively led to inquire, "is this true?" "Do the birds talk?" "Did the Crow and Dove actually meet and hold the conversation here related?" But in reply we are told that the caption introduces it as a *fable*. True—but the word "*fable*" is not defined; and if it were, most children will become sufficiently advanced to read the story, before they can comprehend the policy of conveying a *moral*, by relating things that never happened.

Other lessons occur in the same book of a kin to the one mentioned, such as "The Bee and Wasp;" "The Spider and Silk-Worm;" "The Two Books." In the third book we find "The Swallow and Red-Breast;" "Story of a Robin, related by herself;" "The Groom and the Horse;" "The Squirrel and Weasel," and many others which might be mentioned; all of which are purely *fictional*, and they are known to be so by the adult: but does the child know it? He interrogates his teacher or his parents, to know if they are true. They tell him "no; they are not intended to be believed." His next interrogation is, "Why do men print false stories for children to read?" How shall we answer these interrogatories, and satisfy the inquiring mind of the child?

Again, we will take such lessons as "Ruth

and her Doll;" "Jane Bruce;" "Dame Fuller;" "Little Lucy," and many others of the same class, found in Cobb's Series: stories which *perhaps* are true, and perhaps not. And if *true*, they are undoubtedly highly colored, and do not present us with pictures of *real* life. The child inquires of us, "Is this true?" We reply that we do not know. Is the mind of that child satisfied? Is he not apt to imbibe the idea that much that is written in books is *untrue*; and that if authors have a right to fib, it is right for *him* to fib too! Let us now direct the child to another class of lessons, and observe the contrast. Take for instance, the story of George Washington; the lessons on the history of parchment, printing, paper, ink, &c. and the treatises on chocolate, pepper, nutmeg, ginger, cinnamon, turpentine, alum, &c. These are lessons which convey very much of useful instruction, and are told in a manner which is as well calculated to *please*, as any of the fictitious stories. The child reads them with interest; his wonder and curiosity are somewhat excited, and he again inquires, "Is this true?" We answer yes; that is *truth*. He is now delighted and satisfied, and finds that he has not spent his time and labor for nought.

It will be impossible to condense in a single sheet, all that can and ought to be said upon this subject, but I will be as brief as possible, and content myself with referring to one or two more points, hoping that others who wield an abler pen, will take up the subject and furnish us with detail. It is a fact, which cannot have escaped the observation of the most careless, that as a *people*, we are getting to be a nation of novel readers. Hundreds of periodicals, in the shape of newspapers, pamphlets, &c. are poured in upon us from every quarter, filled to the brim, and running over with "*fictitious scum*," (I might rather say *real scum*,) and who could have failed of witnessing the avidity with which these dry husks are seized upon, and monthly, semi-monthly, weekly and daily, devoured by the eager multitude. I think I shall be safe in asserting, that at least seven-tenths of those who are called "*reading people*" have become so surfeited with this sort of nonsensical trash, as to lose all relish for reading of a substantial nature. This is becoming an alarming evil, and one which ere long, if allowed to grow unchecked, will require the united energies of the good of all classes to eradicate. It is seldom that we witness an assemblage of young persons, that we do not hear more or less about the *Pickwick Papers*, *Dickens'* or *Cooper's* *Novels*, and others of a similar description; and while dwelling on these themes, the conversation is lively and animated; all feel a deep interest, and nearly all have comments to make upon them. But change the subject, and introduce something of a graver, and more instructive nature, the interest immediately subsides, and perhaps not one in five can be induced to participate in the conversation—they are "not at home."

Now, while we deplore this as a growing evil, should we not, as the constituted guardians of the rising generation, and to whom are intrusted the educational interests of hundreds of thousands of immortal minds, endeavor to check the evil in its incipient stage, and apply a reme-

dy before the disease shall have become constitutional and incurable. At the *least*, is it not the duty of superintendents, teachers, parents, and all friends of education, to guard against introducing any thing to the minds of children, which will have a tendency to beget, foster and feed this appetite for light reading? And I would further ask, do not the lessons, or many of them, to which I have before referred, possess that tendency? Do they not rather create a taste for the marvellous, the strange, the high-colored, the visionary and unnatural, while the pupil at the same time seems to contract a disrelish for *truth*? My convictions are so pungent and clear in this matter, that although I greatly desire a change in our reading books, still I cannot engage as spiritedly in favor of any of the present works, as I might, were it not for the objections above mentioned.

The child, from the commencement of his "*school life*," until its close, spends a great portion of his time in reading. Now, could we have a series of reading books, the first numbers adapted to the capacities of beginners, composed in an easy, familiar and interesting style, and embracing the principles of the Natural Sciences, such as Botany, Chemistry, Natural Philosophy, &c. the whole series to be a continuation of the same subjects, and the higher numbers to contain a fuller and more comprehensive view of them, accompanied with questions and definitions—the child might, before the close of his schooling, without devoting an additional moment's time to the exercise, by continually reading and hearing the same subjects treated upon, acquire a good *general knowledge* of all these branches, which are now crowded out of our primary schools, for the reason that the scholar has no time to devote to their acquisition.

O. W. RANDALL,

Supt. Oswego Co.

Phenix, April 8, 1844.

ARAB ACCOUNT OF DEBTOR AND CREDITOR.—Corporal punishments are unknown among the Arabs. Pecuniary fines are awarded, whatever may be the nature of the crime of which a man is accused. Every offence has its fine ascertained in the court of justice, and the nature and amount of those graduated fines are well known to the Arabs. All insulting expressions, all acts of violence, a blow however slight, (and a blow may differ in its degree of insult according to the part struck,) and the infliction of a wound, from which even a single drop of blood flows, all have their respective fines fixed. The judge's sentence is sometimes to this effect: (Bokhyt and Djolan are two Arabs who have quarreled and fought.)

Bokhyt called Djolan "a dog." Djolan returned the insult by a blow upon Bokhyt's arm; then Bokhyt cut Djolan's shoulder with a knife. Bokhyt therefore owes to Djolan—

For the insulting expression, 1 sheep
For wounding him in the shoulder 3 camels

Djolan owes to Bokhyt—

For the blow upon his arm 1 camel
Remain due to Djolan, 3 camels and 1 sheep.
Burckhardt's Notes on the Bedouins and Wahabys.

DISTRICT SCHOOL JOURNAL.

ALBANY, MAY, 1844.

TEACHER'S INSTITUTES.

We had prepared a notice of the use, progress and condition of these admirable auxiliaries to the school system, but from such imperfect data, that we have deferred its publication in the hope that the managers of these Institutions will forward us the information necessary to a full history of their organization, for the benefit of those counties, which have not yet attempted their establishment.

In the next Journal, we hope to publish a law for the organization of a Normal School at Albany. The bill has passed the Assembly by an almost unanimous vote, and now awaits the action of the Senate. Should this great measure prevail, the County Institutes will assume a still more important and interesting relation to the system.

COMMON SCHOOL MANUAL.

MR. VAN BENTHUYSEN of this city, have just issued a work intended for the several county, town and district officers, connected with our Common Schools, entitled "A MANUAL of the COMMON SCHOOL SYSTEM of the state of New-York," by S. S. RANDALL, General Deputy Superintendent &c. &c. The work comprises a detailed history of the origin and progress of the system, and an account of its present condition. The various provisions of the existing laws are briefly and accurately stated under the several heads of "Town Superintendents," "Inhabitants of Districts," "Trustees," "Collector," "County Superintendents," &c. &c. The decisions of the department, as contained in the volume published in 1837, are condensed under each head and applied to the law as it now stands; and the several expositions and instructions of the successive Superintendents, forms of proceedings, &c. are given, together with a complete summary of the various local provisions in the several cities and villages. The object of the compiler has been to give a comprehensive and at the same time an accurate view of our common school system, for the benefit as well of those immediately concerned in its administration, as of the public generally; and

from the long experience of Mr. R. in the common school department, and his perfect familiarity with the complicated provisions of our school laws, we can cheerfully and strongly commend it to officers and inhabitants of school districts, county and town superintendents, and others who may be desirous of a more familiar acquaintance with the system.

ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS.

It is not claiming too much for these reports to characterize them as the most valuable documents, in reference not merely to the actual condition and future prospects of our common schools, but to the means and ends of educational science in general, which have heretofore, at any time, been given to the public. They shed a flood of light upon the practical operations of our admirable system of public instruction: give us the details of that system in its most minute departments; and bring before us in a tangible shape, all the advantages which our annual expenditure of upwards of two millions of dollars, is bestowing upon us and our children, all the embarrassments and obstacles, which in various forms and combinations impede the progress, and retard the triumphs of elementary instruction—and all the influences direct and indirect, beneficial or adverse, which are brought to bear on the physical, intellectual, and moral culture of the six hundred and fifty thousand children, who are so soon to affix their impress, for good or for evil, upon all our institutions, civil, social and religious. We have perused these reports with that deep interest, which the subjects discussed are so well calculated to elicit, and we have risen from the perusal full of hope for the future, as well as of gratitude for the past. THE STATE has done its whole duty, in providing the most ample means for the education of every child within its borders; in preparing and maturing a system for the communication and diffusion of knowledge, second to none in the world; and in confiding the administration of that system to intelligent and responsible agents, emanating directly from, and accountable immediately to the people; and so classified as to secure a thorough, orderly, and harmonious gradation, comprehending in its results, and concentrating in its progress the interests and welfare of every class of community.

The means, the system, and the agents for its administration having thus been secured, it remains only that the people for whose benefit and that of their children, all these inestimable advantages have been secured, should cordially and efficiently co-operate with the public authorities in giving vitality and perpetuity to the grandest undertaking ever conceived by any age; that of the universal education, the mental and moral culture of the rising generation. In order that they may do so intelligently, wisely, and well, we commend to them the sound and practical admonitions of the sixty-two officers, to whom they have themselves confided the task of supervision over their elementary institutions of learning; and who have here faithfully rendered

an account of their responsible stewardship, and indicated to their constituency the ample resources hitherto unexplored, which are embraced in the vast field of labor, now opened in its whole length and breadth for cultivation.

The various subjects of discussion which were assigned by the head of the department to the several superintendents, have been treated in general with ability. Most of them indicate reflection and research; and not a few of them would do honor to the most experienced and profound educators of the nineteenth century. We have space only for a cursory glance at these documents, embracing as they do, upwards of five hundred and fifty closely printed pages, reserving for a future occasion such extracts from them, as shall serve to convey an adequate idea of their value, and a more extended knowledge of the practical workings of our system, under its present organization.

Mr. DWIGHT's report, (Albany Co.) is principally confined to an investigation of the causes which have hitherto so powerfully operated to retard the efficiency of the schools as the dispensers of knowledge, and the conservators and nurseries of sound morality. These he traces principally to a want of enlightened interest on the part of the people in these elementary institutions, and a consequent indifference or faithlessness in those to whom their administration is directly committed. The moral influences which have at any time flowed from the schools, have in his judgment, been an accidental effect rather than a prominent and distinct object of the intellectual cultivation afforded. A radical reform in this respect is regarded as indispensable to the future welfare and good order of society; and various plans are suggested, by which results more in consonance with the moral dignity and intellectual elevation of humanity, may be secured in our primary schools; the foundations of the religious sentiment strongly laid, and every portion of the superstructure of education firmly cemented by sound principles of truth, virtue and goodness. He concludes an able, well written, and well reasoned report on the topic of "Moral Education," with the expression of his "deep conviction that unless our schools are made schools of virtue as well as knowledge, the days of our institutions are numbered." In this conviction every intelligent mind which has accustomed itself to ponder upon the indissoluble connection between the general prevalence of private corruption, and the speedy retributions of public calamity, must participate; nor can the peculiar and distinctive element of popular sovereignty which pervades our institutions, be too carefully preserved from the corroding influences to which, beyond all preceding combinations of the social fabric, it is so prominently exposed. The fabric of our institutions rests upon popular intelligence and public virtue. These should be inseparable; as their combination is indispensable to the ultimate success of the noblest experiment upon which an advanced civilization has hitherto adventured.

Mr. SPENCER, the superintendent of the northern section of Allegany county, after giving an encouraging account of the condition of the several schools under his supervision, dwells with much force upon the practical advantages capable of being secured by an intelligent system of classification among the pupils, and a judicious

appropriation of the time of the teacher, not only to the various branches of instruction, but to the specific mental requirements of each individual under his charge. "The same amount of mental effort," he very properly observes, "must not be required indiscriminately of those who at first view would seem to be of equal ability." His colleague Mr. WILLSON, discusses in a very clear and scientific manner the best mode of teaching the alphabet. He gives the sanction of his approbation to the mode now universally prevalent in the best foreign schools, of teaching words and letters simultaneously, and in connection with objects or representations of objects, thus divesting the first stages of instruction of its repulsiveness to the youthful mind, by connecting and identifying it with objects of uniform and unfailing pleasure.

Mr. FRAZIER, of Broome, while he draws no very flattering picture of the condition of educational science in his county, fearlessly exposes the culpable indifference of parents to the mental culture of their offspring, and points out what he regards as the prominent causes of the prevailing lethargy on this important subject. On the subject specially assigned to him, "the advantages and disadvantages of a frequent change of teachers" in the several districts, he has given us some very valuable remarks. He comes to the conclusion, that "no advantage can be gained by changing competent instructors," and supports his position by sound and incontrovertible arguments. The frequency of a change of teachers, which has hitherto so universally prevailed, has undoubtedly materially contributed to the comparative inefficiency of our schools. We are glad to see the subject so ably discussed, and so clearly elucidated.

The evils growing out of the "division and subdivision of districts," are forcibly pointed out by Mr. RICE of Cattaraugus; and the results of this system, in a mere pecuniary point of view, happily illustrated in the case of four schools in one town, in three of which, by this process, the cost of tuition for forty-nine scholars was \$32 per month; while in the fourth, under a different system, fifty-two scholars were better instructed for only \$13. "If to this difference," observes the superintendent, "of cost in tuition, be added the cost of two extra houses with their necessary appendages, repairs and furniture; and also the board of two teachers, the difference will be so great as to be almost incredible to those who have not investigated the subject. This fertile source of inefficient instruction is incidentally alluded to, in almost every report of the county superintendents; and its evils are brought out in such strong light, that under the decided stand taken by the head of the department, a speedy reform in this respect may reasonably be anticipated.

The "general principles in reference to which fuel should be provided for the winter schools," forms the subject of the report of Mr. J. H. WRIGHT of Cattaraugus. He recommends that fuel should in all cases be provided by tax, and one year in advance; and we fully concur in the propriety and wisdom of this suggestion. The numerous and serious inconveniences resulting from the general neglect on the part of inhabitants and trustees of districts, seasonably to provide a sufficient supply of fuel, properly prepared for use, to say nothing of the physical suffer-

ing thereby induced, demand the prompt attention of all concerned, to the application of the requisite remedy.

The "duties of the inhabitants of districts" in reference to their schools, to their counsels and proceedings in the administration of the affairs of the district, to their school-house, to the employment of competent teachers, and the visitation, inspection, and improvement of their schools, are ably and eloquently discussed by Mr. STORKE of Cayuga, whose report will amply repay an attentive perusal.

Mr. TIDWELL of Chemung, has some very sensible and pertinent observations in reference to the selection of sites for school-houses. "Particular care," he justly remarks, "should be taken, to render every thing connected with early education pleasant and attractive." And again: "The place where the child is to spend those years and months in which his mind is to be most rapidly developed and expanded, should be such as to present the beauties of nature in their loveliest aspect."

Mr. BARNETT of Chenango, reviews the various modes of teaching spelling; but in our judgment, fails in doing justice to this important subject. We regard the use of the *black-board*, as indispensable in teaching spelling. Thousands who find no difficulty in correctly spelling the ordinary words of our language, as a mere oral exercise, habitually mis-spell in writing, from the want of early practice. Spelling should never be taught by itself, but always in connection with writing, composition and definition.

The report of Mr. WOODIN of Columbia, is one of the most valuable and interesting of the series. It exhibits a practical familiarity with the *philosophy* of education, and an enlightened appreciation of the duties incumbent upon a general supervisory officer. On the important subject of the "government and discipline of the schools," Mr. WOODIN has given us some very valuable suggestions, which all teachers will do well to peruse. He takes decided ground against the barbarous usage of corporal punishment, and justly characterizes it as "a practice equally degrading to the scholar who suffers, and to the master who inflicts the punishment," and one which "has done infinite mischief to our schools." We regret that it is out of our power at this time, to transfer to our columns the whole of this admirable and powerful treatise. We hope to be able to do so at an early day; and in the meantime we cannot too strongly express our high appreciation of the value of this contribution to the cause of elementary education, or too earnestly commend it to general perusal.

The superintendent of Cortland county, HENRY S. RANDALL, has given us an elaborate and well-written report on the important subject of "Common School Libraries," in which, after an eloquent peroration on the general advantages which this inestimable institution is capable of securing in the diffusion of knowledge, the awakening of genius and talent, and the dissemination of sound principles of religion and morality, he proceeds to discuss the class of books of which these libraries should be composed, under the heads of Juvenile Books, Sectarian Books, Political Books, Biography and History, Poetry, and Miscellaneous Books. It would be impossible within the brief limits to which we are restricted in the present article, to do any thing like adequate

justice to the merits of this report. If it has any fault, it is that of its great length, and its somewhat discursive range, better adapted to the columns of a literary review, than to the severe dimensions and condensed ratiocination of an official document. It is, nevertheless, a masterly exposition of the great subject of school libraries; and will, we trust, be widely disseminated. The principles which are laid down on the subject, more especially of "Sectarian Books" are such as commend themselves to every impartial and right judging mind; and the general rules in reference to which, works comprehended in the various departments of literature, should be selected for the District Library, are clearly and intelligently laid down. No one can rise from the perusal of this document without a higher appreciation of the noble and far reaching policy which provided for every section and district, and for every family—nay, we might safely add, every individual of this great State, the means of the highest intellectual and moral culture, which the ample resources of the past have been able to supply. In this respect, if in this only, New-York is incomparably in advance of the most enlightened nations of the Old World.

Messrs. MCFARLAND and HUGHSTON of Delaware, give a very satisfactory account of the condition and prospects of the several schools under their supervision; and the report of the former is accompanied with a faithful exposition of the evils resulting from "irregular attendance" on the part of pupils—evils, the extent of which are seldom suspected by parents, and which we fear, can scarcely be rooted out, while an indirect encouragement to their continuance is held out, by the existing mode of making out rate-bills.

Mr. CLEMENT of Dutchess county, after a general survey of the condition of the schools under his charge, proceeds to give his views on the subject of "Oral Instruction," specially assigned to him. These views are in the main, sound and well reasoned. The time is coming, when with few exceptions, the use of text books in our schools, so far at least as the teaching is concerned, will be entirely abandoned, and instruction be orally communicated. Mr. MANN informs us, that in his visitations of the Prussian schools during a period of six weeks, he found not a single text-book of any kind in the hands of the teacher. One of the superintendents of Washington county, details a case coming under his observation, where a class of scholars from eight to ten years of age, manifested a perfect familiarity with the leading outlines and general principles of geography, grammar, and arithmetic, although they had been exercised in these branches during a few months only, and had *never studied a book upon either of these subjects*, their parents having been either unable or unwilling to provide them. The school was taught by a well qualified female teacher; and both the superintendent and teacher concurred in the opinion, that these children had made much greater proficiency, and had acquired a much more familiar acquaintance with *all* of these branches, than they would have gained of *any one of them* in the same space of time, simply by the study of books. Such facts speak trumpet-tongued in favor of the substitution of oral instruction for the lifeless routine now too generally in vogue in our schools.

The condition of the schools in Erie county,

and particularly of those in the city of Buffalo, is clearly set forth in the report of Mr. ELY. There are few cities in the Union, in which a more efficient system exists, or one more judiciously and ably administered, and accomplishing more satisfactory results, than in the city of Buffalo.

Mr. SHUMWAY of Essex, speaks encouragingly and hopefully of the prospects of the schools under his supervision; and his report is characterized throughout by great good sense, sound judgment, and practical discrimination. His classification of teachers, with reference to their qualifications is judicious; and his strictures on the miserable condition of some of the school-houses in his county, are well applied, and to the point. His remarks on the topic specially assigned to him, the "Introduction of vocal music into the Common Schools," are eloquent, instructive, and philosophical. We look forward to the general adoption of this most delightful branch of education, as the harbinger of a new era, not in our schools merely, but in every department of society. The language of music is intelligible to humanity wherever found, and is unimpeded by any of those barriers which "make enemies of nations" elsewhere combined. Its genial and soothing influences, open the mind to the reception and enlightened appreciation of the elevating doctrines of pure Christianity; and wherever its notes are heard, the harsh discords of ignorance, error, vice and guilt, cease to "unhinge and vex the soul." Who shall undertake to set bounds to the beneficial consequences which may be expected to result from the early and thorough training of the youthful mind under the united influences of well qualified female teachers, the daily lessons of undiluted Christianity, as it came from the lips of its Great Teacher, and the harmonizing strains of music, agreeably diversifying the intellectual and moral lessons daily imbibed into the pure minds of childhood.

We pass by a natural transition to another important improvement in our system of elementary instruction, which may be expected to follow in the wake of those to which we have just alluded: the entire abolition, namely, of *corporal punishment*. Mr. D. H. STEVENS, of Franklin, to whom this topic was specially assigned, has brought to bear upon it an array of facts and arguments, which in our judgment, not even the able and powerful essay of Mr. HENRY of Herkimer, in opposition to this reform, can shake. Mr. STEVENS, we think, has succeeded in establishing the proposition, that the infliction of corporal punishment, almost inevitably stimulates the animal propensities of both pupil and teacher, at the expense of the moral sentiments; that it rarely, if ever, accomplishes the object for which it is resorted to—that it awakens and often perpetuates the worst passions of our common nature, and becomes a prolific and unfailing source of dissension in districts; that admitting the power of parents, and even their duty to chastise their children as a means of discipline, this power cannot safely be delegated to teachers; and that its exercise is wholly unnecessary as a means of school discipline. The positions assumed by Mr. HENRY strike us as utterly subversive of all reform, and opposed to all possibility of future progress in the amelioration of humanity. Because men are not now all that they should be—all they

are capable of being—therefore, according to Mr. HENRY, we must not only apply the only means of discipline, which, in their present imperfect moral condition they can understand and appreciate; but we must insist upon this as the measure of our standard for the future. Because the animal propensities of our common nature, are not yet subjected to the control of the higher reason and the enlightened conscience, we must continue to excite and irritate those propensities, instead of allaying and humanizing them. And the authority of Solomon, and the retributory sanctions of the Jewish commonwealth are gravely insisted upon, as models for the christian civilization of the nineteenth century! We were prepared for the repetition of these arguments from the mouths of tyrannical, passionate, and incompetent teachers of the "old school," but we confess, that we expected a more enlarged and ennobling philosophy from one of the pioneers "of a better order of things!"

Mr. SPRAGUE, of Fulton, has an excellent treatise on Normal schools; and although he does not go quite as extensively into the subject as we might have wished, he has very well succeeded in calling the public attention to the important subject. The success which has attended the administration of the schools of his county, affords gratifying assurance of the wisdom of his measures, and the fidelity of his devotion to the interests of education. The institution at Kingsboro', over which he has presided, and which is devoted to the preparation of teachers, has been the means, under his enlightened supervision, of effecting a great improvement in the common schools in that vicinity; while it forcibly exhibits the practicability of establishing and supporting similar institutions in every county of the state, even independently of the public aid, where a sound public opinion is prepared to co-operate in the great work of improving our elementary schools, by supplying them with competent teachers.

The "Course and extent of study proper to be pursued in Common Schools," forms the principal topic of the report of Mr. NAV of Genesee, who has laid down a comprehensive chart for instructors, embracing indeed all the elements of a sound and "generous culture" of the mental faculties. Mr. NAV gives due prominence to moral education, and very earnestly insists upon this, as the indispensable basis of all subsequent improvement. Upon this he would engraft all the higher branches of an English education, including astronomy, physiology, chemistry, and natural and moral philosophy. We have long been of opinion, that under proper auspices, our common schools might be made to supersede altogether the necessity of academical and high schools of every grade; and we are happy to find our views confirmed by so practical an educationist as Mr. NAV.

The report of Mr. CLEAVELAND, of Greene, is very brief; comprising, however, a plan for the improvement of village schools—of which, we cannot speak very favorably. The subject has evidently not been well considered, and is quite superficially treated. There are, notwithstanding, some good suggestions, considered by themselves, applicable to all our schools.

Mr. HOLCOMB of Hamilton, with twenty-one districts spread over an area of immensely disproportionate extent, has faithfully carried into

the wilderness the message of educational improvement; and districts comprising scarcely inhabitants enough to fill the offices required by the school law, have under his energetic auspices, organized and maintained schools, which need not blush when compared with some of the best in the state.

Mr. L. H. Brown, of Jefferson, has efficiently supplied the vacancy occasioned by the absence of his late colleague, Mr. MAYHEW, who has been invited to preside over one of the higher institutions of learning in Michigan. Mr. Brown's report is an extremely interesting and instructive document: going over almost the entire ground of practical education—pointing out the various defects in the local administration of the common school system, and suggesting the appropriate remedy—and appealing with an eloquence and earnestness worthy of the subject and of the occasion, to the inhabitants of the several districts, to set about the work of reform, with a firm determination to persevere until education becomes what it is capable of becoming—the regenerator of the race. Both in matter and manner, this is one of the ablest of the reports before us; and we commend it to the perusal of every friend of education, as embodying a mass of truly valuable suggestions clothed in the attractive garb of a pure style and a lofty eloquence.

Mr. PATCHIN, of Livingston, exposes with unsparing severity, the defects under which the schools in his county still suffer. We are sorry, however, to see him even indirectly recognizing the policy of inflicting physical flagellation in our schools "as a *last resort*," and accompanied with "the most serious and friendly admonition." He is evidently struggling to break the last link which connects us with this "relic of barbarism;" and it is some consolation to know that "two-thirds less punishment" has been inflicted during the last term of the schools under his supervision, than in any of the preceding terms; and that his exertions are directed to its gradual extirpation, by the substitution of the "great principle of love," and of "appeals made by the teacher to the reason." We cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of an extract from the faithful record of his experience in this respect: and we ask of the enlightened friends of education, after its perusal, to say upon their consciences, whether they are willing longer to wink at barbarities like these, even as a "last resort," and with all the benevolent accompaniments of privacy and "serious and friendly admonition," under the sanction even of Solomon himself. "A greater than Solomon" inculcates a lesson, much more in accordance with the enlightened civilization of the nineteenth century. But to the extract:

"When visiting schools for the purpose of discouraging punishment as much as possible, and for the purpose of producing the feeling of responsibility to self-government, the pupils were asked the following question: 'Have you been punished?' 'All who have not been punished this term, may manifest it by holding up their hand.' In this way, the extent of corporal punishment was at once known. It was pleasing to notice often, that not a single scholar had been the subject of flagellation. The joy manifested in the countenances of the children was an evident token of their happiness and

satisfaction in being privileged to show to their visitors their correct deportment. But the relics of the old dispensation have not all passed away. They still linger, as if to remind us of the glory of the new. In one instance, I found fourteen out of a school of sixteen, had felt the rod. In another, sixteen out of eighteen had been punished. In both of these schools, I found cross, morose instructors. In looking over my note book, I find recorded one of the most disgraceful scenes I ever witnessed in a school-room. Shortly after the school opened, and before it was fully organized, two boys were hauled out on to the floor, to give an account of their doings. One was sent to his seat; the other taken into the entry, with—"what was you doing then?" "Studying," said the boy. "No you want?" and down came the whip upon the shoulders of the lad. The teacher pausing, said, "You were not studying all the while, *was* you?"—"No, sir." "I thought so. Take your seat, and go to studying. Don't tell me wrong stories." The boy did not study fifteen minutes all the afternoon. In a few minutes after, two girls about twelve years of age, were out of order; and the teacher, without a note of warning, sprang across the room and severely flogged them both. About the middle of the afternoon, a small boy, tired of sitting on his hard seat, reclined on his elbows. He was caught by the head, dragged over the desk on to the floor, and ordered to study. He happened, in his fright, to look off his book at his tyrant of a master, when, in a moment, with a "don't be looking at me," the whip was lifted, and it descended several times upon the shoulders of the writhing lad. A little girl, about seven years of age, being naturally playful, did not study enough to suit her teacher. After one or two cross admonitions to "tend to her book," and "not be gauping around the house," (a common expression,) she was unceremoniously caught by the arm, dragged on to the floor, rudely shaken, cuffed on both sides of her head, and to make the punishment complete, whipped. I looked around the room to learn, if I could, what the effect of such scenes was upon the other scholars. I saw no smiling, happy faces. There seemed to settle down upon the countenances of nearly all a cloud of gloom and terror. It was easy to be seen that the respect due to the teacher was not felt; that the feelings of the children were soured, and that there was great danger of their practising deceit, and even lying, to avoid the effects of the displeasure of their instructor. The school closed soon after the punishment of the little girl, and the teacher stepped up to me and remarked, that he did not *punish near as much now as formerly*. I left the school-room with a stronger determination than ever to banish the rod, if possible, from every school-house in the county."

Is it not "passing strange" that after all this experience, Mr. PATCHIN should still cling to this odious mode of "discipline?" "That it is to be used in *extreme cases*," he adds, "perhaps there can be no doubt, but they are rare. That *all* can govern without some reference to the rod, is a question which I am not as yet willing to admit. But that they *ought to* is readily granted. Some men are born to command: 'a tap of Caesar's finger awed a Roman Senate.' But all men cannot do so. Nature has not furnished

them with the power. Some teachers can govern and bring into subjection the most refractory by a word, or look, or motion of the hand, while others cannot govern under the most favorable circumstances." The remedy for this state of things appears to us to suggest itself at once. *Exclude from the schools these teachers who cannot "govern without some reference to the rod," whom "nature has not furnished with the power," and who "cannot govern under the most favorable circumstances."* In the name of humanity, of Christianity, and of the civilization of the nineteenth century, we enter our solemn protest against the longer continuance, under any pretence, any restrictions or limitations, however carefully guarded or cautiously hemmed in, of this revolting usage, emphatically a "relic of barbarism." We bow to no authority, however venerable, which is in direct conflict with the clear teachings of Him, who took to his arms little children, sanctified them by his blessing, and declared that "of such was the kingdom of Heaven." We see no force in the alleged necessity of recognizing a power to inflict such punishment, while we find it necessary strongly to discountenance the exercise of that power on any occasion; nor are we prepared to admit, in the face of the most incontrovertible evidence to the contrary, that the rudest and most vicious natures cannot be controlled and subdued by mildness, by love, and by the irresistible predominance of the higher and nobler nature. Time was when physical superiority was indispensable to the attainment or possession of power. That time we had flattered ourselves, had long since passed away, but its last lingering traces are yet to be found in the school-room, claiming too, the sanction (*under protest*), of the most enlightened friends of popular education. Let us hasten to efface this deep stain from our escutcheon.

We turn from this digression to a more pleasing field of contemplation, presented in the report of Mr. MANCHESTER, of Madison. What a beautiful picture of a rural summer school is here sketched:

"An improvement, worthy of universal patronage, has been made during the past summer, in the appearances and comforts of a number of our school-houses, by the fair beings who presided over their inmates. Where were formerly seen nothing but naked, gloomy and disfigured walls, broken chairs, stoves and tables, rendered still more wretched by the yearly accumulated filth within and without, we found pleasant and inviting houses. The walls were decorated with boughs, evergreens and flowers, wreathed in festoons, emblems and mottoes, calculated to please, interest and instruct. The broken stove was half hid from view by the fragrant geranium, dew plant, monthly rose, &c., which bloomed as beautifully from their iron throne as in the splendid mansion, and no more liable to destruction from ruthless and careless hands. Daily the flower pot was furnished by gratuitous contributions, and each pupil seemed to vie with the other to see which should contribute most to the comfort, beauty and neatness of the room. This reform was not always confined to the school-room, but the yard, if there was any, which is rather rare, was free from every disfiguring, uncouth and demoralizing object. All this was accomplished by women's skill, and too much

praise cannot be given them. I only regret that their number is not greater, for they are worthy models for imitation—worthy to teach, by example as well as by precept."

Mr. MANCHESTER has also given us some very sound and statesmanlike views, in relation to the principles which should govern the apportionment and distribution of the school money, in its various shapes. Although put forth with great modesty and deference, they are entitled to an attentive examination at the hands of those who are empowered to make the necessary modifications in our existing system; and while we should differ with him in some of the details, and even principles of the plan he has suggested, we are free to concede that in many respects they are preferable to the present mode of distribution. Few, we apprehend, are fully aware of the influence which the distribution of the avails of the school fund and of its collateral channels exerts on the efficiency of the entire system of public instruction in all its parts, and in perusing the report under consideration, we have been painfully struck with the inconsistencies, anomalies, and in some instances, the absolute injustice which it presents.

Mr. BARLOW, the late colleague of Mr. M., and now a member of the Senate of this State, has given us a masterly exposition of the "importance of an accurate knowledge of the definition and meaning of words in elementary studies." Intimately connected as this subject is, with the very foundation of instruction, we rejoice that its discussion has been committed to so able hands, and that it has been placed before the public in the attractive garb of true eloquence and talent.

Messrs. ROCHESTER and BROWN, of Monroe, have submitted a very able report on the condition of the common schools of that county, accompanied with a variety of practical suggestions for their progressive improvement. Mr. ROCHESTER gives us his views on the subject of the employment of female teachers, and we need not add that they are decidedly favorable to the more general introduction into both summer and winter schools, of well qualified females. Public opinion, we are happy to learn, is rapidly tending to this conclusion; a conclusion alike in accordance with *a priori* reasoning and the experience of the best educationists at home and abroad. Mr. Brown recapitulates the practical results of the public school system in the city of Rochester, results highly gratifying in themselves, and as the legitimate exponents of the free school system when applied to the educational wants of an intelligent and enterprising population.

Col. STONE confines himself chiefly to an exposition of the condition of the schools of the Public School Society in the city of New-York, and of the schools established under the late act, by the Commissioners, in different parts of the city. He deprecates in strong terms, the policy of this double system—points out its practical inconvenience—shows satisfactorily, as we think, that the Public School Society, but for the interference of the Legislature, would have amply provided for the education of every child within the city desirous of participating in its benefits, and in a manner and to an extent, greatly superior to the utmost practicable effects under the existing law—and inveighs with a lofty and

powerful eloquence against the prostitution of the great and enduring interests of popular education, in the metropolis of the Union, to sinister and party purposes, and especially against the exclusion of the Bible as a "sectarian book," from certain schools organized under the new act. "Strange, indeed," he remarks, "at least it appears so to me, that in this world of sin and crime, such grievous prejudices should exist against allowing our children to drink at the fountain of truth, whence are derived the loftiest notions of virtue, honor, justice, conscience, piety and love of country, all just opinions of the Deity, of moral accountability, of a future state of happiness for those who do well, and of misery for the unrepenting wicked. Strange, at least it appears so to me, regarding, as I have been taught to do, the Bible as the mainstay of every blessing with which our country has been favored, for it was the great chart of civil and religious liberty to the founders of this mighty republic—should be deemed a dangerous book in the hands of the rising generation! Strange, that parents, who wish their children to become acquainted with history, should shut from their eyes the only historical work in the world which is known, every word of it, to be true; and from the pages of which alone can they become acquainted with the origin of our race, and the first three thousand years of the world's history! Strange, that those who would have their children trained in the paths of virtue, should hide from them the purest and most beautiful lessons of that attribute extant! Strange, that those who would have their children educated for the bar, should close against their inspection the works of the greatest lawgiver who has ever lived! Strange, that those who would have their offspring trained for the forum, should exclude from their studies the most glowing passages of eloquence to be found in any human language! Strange, that those who might fondly hope for a bard in their family, should inhibit the study of the loftiest strains of poetry ever written! Strange, that those who only aspire to a good substantial English education for their children, should nevertheless debar them from the privilege of reading the book which, of all others, contains the purest model of our language—a well of English undefiled! But stranger than all, that republicans, holding the belief of man's direct accountability to his Maker alone, on matters of religion—the enemies of Church and State—should prohibit to their offspring the inspection of that great charter of civil and religious liberty which has been conferred upon man directly by his Creator! But I forbear. In the beautiful language of an anonymous author before me, I regard the Bible 'as an invaluable treasure: a volume more precious than rubies: the repository of all that can enlighten the understanding, comfort the heart, and elevate the affections. It opens to us sources of pure and unalloyed felicity; it is the rich fountain of faith, of hope, of charity, of every holy principle and noble virtue. It gilds the dark vale of tears with beams of celestial peace and sacred joy. It infuses into the bitter cup of adversity unutterable consolation, and presents to the enraptured vision of the poor and friendless sufferer, the radiant mansions of immortal fruition.' And such a book must be banished from our schools!"

Mr. PITTS gives a brief, but faithful and en-

couraging account of the schools of Niagara county; and Messrs. COMSTOCK and MOULTON, of those of Oneida. Appended to the latter is a very able and well written treatise on "Composition as a branch of Common School Education," the subject specially assigned to Mr. M.

Mr. BARNES, of Onondaga, represents the schools under his supervision as rapidly improving; and many of his observations and suggestions are valuable and interesting. His colleague, Mr. EDWARDS, furnishes an admirable essay on "Book-keeping as a branch of study," a subject worthy of more attention on the part of teachers of common schools, than it has hitherto received.

Mr. TOOKER, of Orange, dwells with great force and eloquence on the importance of a more thorough moral culture in our schools. His remarks on this topic are worthy of general attention and practical regard; and we could wish that his earnest admonitions might meet with an universal response from every teacher, and every officer in any way connected with the administration of our common schools. We must make our elementary institutions nurseries of virtue and pure morality, before we can expect from them the legitimate results of sound knowledge. We must first "seek the kingdom of Heaven and its righteousness," and then we may confidently look for a blessing on the exertions of those who would communicate to our youth, the means of intellectual excellence. Mr. Tooker also advertises, in an able and discriminating manner, to the various additional requisites to the practical efficiency of our common schools, and his suggestions are uniformly characterized by great good sense and sound judgment.

We have been especially delighted with the admirable report of Mr. REYNOLDS, of Orleans. It is exceedingly brief, notwithstanding the fact that it discusses three important topics, specially assigned by the department, viz: "Play-grounds," "School Registers," and "School Celebrations." Each subject is well considered, due prominence given to each, and the report as a whole, both in matter and manner, affords an admirable specimen of compositional beauty, and, if we may be permitted the expression, condensed fulness.

Mr. O. W. RANDALL, of Oswego, is more diffuse in his style, but no less effective in forcibly presenting the strength of the argument against the maintenance of "Select Schools"—the topic specially assigned to him. He has done full justice to a most important subject, and we cannot but hope that his valuable report may find its way to the hands of that large and respectable class of our fellow-citizens, who, without due reflection we are confident, insist upon excluding their children from the common schools, for the purpose of providing them with more *select* means of instruction.

The report of Mr. PALMER, of Otsego, is an exceedingly valuable document—exhibiting the results of a faithful, thorough and efficient performance of the duties devolved upon him, and containing a variety of admirable suggestions for the improvement of the schools, and the advancement of the interests of education. On the subject of Text-Books, he has given us some sound and practical remarks, illustrating the embarrassments and difficulties under which the schools labor, in consequence of the great diversity of authors and of systems in use. Probably the only practicable and effectual remedy for

this evil, is to be found in the substitution of Oral Instruction, under the auspices of competent and thoroughly prepared teachers.

Mr. POTTER, of Queens, after entering his protest against the policy of "voluminous" reports, and public exposures of existing evils, in regard to the schools, bravely conches a lance against the academies in his neighborhood, as the natural enemies of the common schools. While we fully agree with him as to the impolicy of further legislative encouragement to these institutions, apart from their connection with a harmonious and comprehensive system of public instruction, we are inclined to suspect that the backward condition of the common schools in Queens county, may be traced to a different source—the want of a pervading popular interest in their behalf. There is no excuse for the lamentable indifference to this subject which seems to prevail in this wealthy and cultivated section of the state; and no conceivable reason why the schools on Long Island should not be the very best in the world. With a climate unrivalled in beauty—a succession of scenery beautiful beyond compare—a fertility of soil, the result of nearly two centuries of culture—and a combination of wealth, the reward of long continued and honorable enterprise and industry—this island of the country seats of the *millionaires* of the metropolis, should be dotted with institutions of learning of the very highest grade; should become the *Mecca* of popular education of the world! Let the worthy and experienced Superintendent of Queens, become the apostle of this magnificent undertaking!

Mr. BURDICK, of Rensselaer, concludes his review of the condition of the schools in his county with a well written essay on the "Importance of Public Associations of Teachers and friends of Education generally," a subject which cannot be too strongly commended to the public attention, and to which Mr. BURDICK has done ample justice.

Mr. CROSEY, of Richmond, gives us a comprehensive survey of the field of labor upon which he has but recently entered, and which he is obviously eminently capable, in due season, of bringing under the highest culture. We anticipate from his well known character and experience, the most valuable results from his supervision of the schools of this county.

Mr. BLAUVELT, of Rockland, after a somewhat discouraging account of the state of elementary education in this section of the state, has some excellent suggestions on the "Influence of public sentiment on popular Education." We trust his appeal in behalf of the schools, will be responded to by those for whom it is designed, and that the embarrassments resulting from the apathy of the public mind to the educational improvements of the age, will rapidly disappear under the genial influences of an enlightened appreciation of their value and importance.

Mr. A. SMITH, of Saratoga, in a very lengthy and elaborate report, examines with much ability, the entire structure, peculiar organization and vast capabilities of the common school system, in all its details, including the objects and attainments of the system, its foundation, school-houses and their appurtenances, school districts, libraries, the school itself and its management, government and discipline, modes of teaching, teachers, and their qualification; and then passes

by an easy and natural transition, to the subject of "Intellectual Culture," specially assigned to him by the department. His views on this great topic are ably drawn out, and are, in the main, comprehensive, sound and well sustained by facts and arguments. He bases intellectual cultivation upon the firm foundations of sound religious and moral culture, and admits of no separation of the intellect and the heart. In his view, intellectual culture rises at once to the dignity of moral science, subordinating to itself all knowledge and all instruction, and taking its appropriate place as the climax of human excellence. The various branches of elementary instruction are reviewed in this connection, and the most appropriate modes of communicating a knowledge of each, adverted to; and the whole subject is presented in an attractive and instructive form, admirably adapted to practical utility and general adoption.

Mr. FONDA, of Schenectady, presents the results of his supervision in a brief but lucid form, showing a manifest and rapid improvement of the common schools under his charge—an enlightened appreciation on the part of the inhabitants of the districts generally, of the interests of elementary education—an increasing spirit of improvement on the part of teachers—and a general advancement in the standard of qualification required by public sentiment. The hopeful and cheerful spirit which pervades the report, affords an encouraging earnest for the future, and is admirably calculated to secure the accomplishment of those great objects which are thus shown to be within the reach of the districts, their officers and teachers.

Mr. E. SMITH, of Schoharie, after a brief survey of the condition of the schools under his supervision, concludes with a very able treatise on the expediency of the introduction of Physiology as a branch of common school education. The great truths which lie at the foundation of an intelligent knowledge of the structure and functions of an organized being, are earnestly and elegantly dwelt upon, as indispensable to an enlightened system of elementary instruction, and the introduction into our common schools of this branch of education, is enforced by the highest considerations of expediency and practical utility.

Mr. FINCH, of Steuben, concludes his general report, which exhibits evidence of a faithful performance of his duty in all its branches, with a masterly treatise on the method of teaching English Grammar, which we commend to the attention of all teachers, as the results of a long and intimate acquaintance with the philosophy of the English language, and a discriminating analysis of its various parts, in reference to the principles of its composition and the mode of its instruction.

The reports of Messrs. HOPKINS and FOORD, of St. Lawrence, are somewhat meagre in their details, and present us no very flattering view of the condition of the common schools under their supervision. The former has some very sensible remarks on the special topic assigned to him, viz: the "General duty of Academies in the preparation of Teachers of Common Schools," although the subject might well have admitted of greater amplification; and the latter submits a few brief observations on the "Effect and general policy of increasing the Common School Fund," adverse,

however, to any further increase of the Fund at present.

The report of Mr. PRESTON, of Suffolk, is mainly confined to the statistical information required by the department. That of Mr. MYERS, of Sullivan, is an intelligent exposure of existing deficiencies in modes of teaching the various branches of study pursued in the common schools, accompanied with valuable suggestions for their reform. Mr. WILLIAMS, of Tioga, expatiates on the importance and use of the Black-board in the schools with much ability. Mr. DENMAN, of Tompkins, gives us an interesting history of the origin, progress and prospects of the system of "Teachers' Institutes," which he claims to have been the first to introduce; a system which in our judgment, is calculated to do great good in preparing teachers, whose opportunities and means for more thorough course of Normal instruction are restricted, for the proper performance of their duties, but by no means adapted to the educational wants of the community in this respect. It may stand in the same relation to efficient and well endowed Normal schools, that the visitors appointed by the Superintendent under the act of 1839, did to the County Superintendents, who were called into existence mainly through their searching exposures of the evils under which the common schools labored from a want of adequate supervision.

Mr. HARDENBURGH, of Ulster, presents a most gratifying account of the improved condition of the schools under his supervision. His remarks are characterized by strong good sense, and an accurate appreciation of the efficacy of judicious and concentrated action on the part of the town Superintendents, to the attainment of the great objects of the common school system.

Mr. BALDWIN, of Warren, faithfully depicts the embarrassments growing out of the employment of incompetent teachers; "a total neglect," with few exceptions, "of all specific moral training, and a total absence of manners"—the miserable condition of the school-houses, and the irregularity of attendance (justifiable surely under such circumstances, if ever, and rather commendable than otherwise,) on the part of the pupils. It is by no means matter of surprise, after all this, that Mr. B. disapproves of the introduction of Geology as a branch of study, in the common schools. On general principles, however, and with reference to that improved condition of these institutions now in progress, we must dissent with him entirely, in his position on this subject. We know of no science which could, in our judgment, be more readily and advantageously introduced into the circle of common school education, than that of the physical condition of the earth. The apparatus necessary to its illustration is ever at hand and accessible, and with a familiar acquaintance on the part of the teacher of its elementary principles, every child of ordinary understanding could be initiated into its rudiments and enabled to master its details without the slightest difficulty, at least so far as may be requisite to all the ordinary purposes of life. What can be more advantageous than a knowledge of the composition and quality of the different soils, which are every day presented to the observation of the child—the composition of the various minerals and fossils which abound around him—and a familiar acquaintance with the slow but certain process by which hills, moun-

tains and valleys are formed, rivers scooped out and oceans interspersed with islands and continents? It is idle to say that "pupils cannot command time to devote to this study," or that teachers cannot be found competent to teach it. Pupils will make time for this purpose, and the introduction of the study as a branch of common school education, will speedily make teachers acquainted with its details and principles. We hope to see more enlightened and liberal notions prevail on this great subject than those embodied in this report.

We come now to the valuable report of Mr. A. WRIGHT, of Washington, mainly devoted to an elaborate and exceedingly able discussion of the great subject of "Physical Education." The views of Mr. WRIGHT on this branch of elementary instruction, are sound and pertinent—in harmonious accordance with those of the great masters of the science of Physiology, in its indissoluble connection with mental and moral culture—and in conformity to the advanced civilization of the age. Next to the valuable contributions of the Messrs. COMBE, of Edinburgh, and HORACE MANN, of Massachusetts, on this department of knowledge, we are inclined to place this admirable essay. It is eminently practical and philosophical in all its details, and brings home to every parent and every teacher, the vast importance of an enlightened acquaintance with the structure and functions of the human body, and the invariable and inflexible laws of our organic being. A knowledge of these, and an obedience to their requirements, are absolutely indispensable to health and life. Mr. WRIGHT has entitled himself to the thanks of every friend of education for his clear, lucid and eloquent exposition of these fundamental principles of physical knowledge.

The report of his colleague, Mr. W. WRIGHT, is characterized by a discriminating acquaintance with the true principles of elementary education, and exhibits ample evidence of a faithful and enlightened supervision of the schools under his charge. His account of the advancement of these schools, and of the modes by which that advancement has been gradually secured, is full of encouragement for the future, and shows what may be accomplished under the auspices of a sound public sentiment, and an energetic devotion to the interests and welfare of the rising generation.

"The use of the Bible in Common Schools," forms the topic of the report of Mr. GREEN, of Wayne, and the subject is very judiciously treated. He is of opinion that instead of using the Bible as a text-book, select passages from it only should be reverently read at the opening and close of the schools, or at such intervals and on such occasions as might be deemed proper. In this view of the subject we are disposed fully to concur.

On the subject of "Religious Exercises" in common schools, Mr. HOLMES, of Westchester, submits some very sensible observations. While he would disown any compulsory requisitions for the observance of these exercises, he regards them as exerting a highly beneficial influence on the moral deportment and character of the pupils who participate in them, and accordingly recommends them, under suitable regulations and restrictions, to general adoption in our elementary schools.

Mr. A. S. STEVENS, of Wyoming, has discussed the subject of "Dissensions in School Districts," with eminent ability and practical good sense. He depicts with genuine fidelity, the origin, progress and disastrous results of these neighborhood feuds, and exposes with an unsparing hand the unworthy and grovelling motives in which they too generally originate. More than all, he gives clear and pertinent directions for avoiding these besetting sins of the school district organization, and for diverting into a purer channel the energies and resources of the inhabitants. In this he has rendered an eminent service, as well to the cause of education, as to the interests of morality and social intercourse.

Last, though by no means least, comes the report of Mr. WHEELER, of Yates, principally devoted to the advantages secured to the several districts, and to the interests of education generally, by the periodical publication of a journal, exclusively devoted to the Common Schools. As a medium of communication between the department and the several officers charged with the administration of the system in all its parts, as the means of securing the co-operation of the people in the measures adopted for the improvement of that system, and as an instrument for the advancement of the qualification of teachers and their elevation as a class, he very justly regards such a periodical as an indispensable, adjunct to a comprehensive system of popular education.

Having now completed our review of these admirable reports, we have only to add our cheerful testimony to that of the Head of the Department, as to the fidelity, zeal, energy and devotedness which have characterized the administration of the several officers charged with the general supervision of the schools within their respective counties. In the face of a powerful counter-current originating in a misapprehension of the powers, duties and functions conferred by the legislature, no less than in a natural feeling of aversion to so great an innovation on the existing system as seemed to be involved in the creation of this office, they have succeeded in the short space of two years, in appeasing the hostility of the most inveterate opponents of the measure thus adopted, in commanding the system to universal favor, and in immeasurably elevating the condition and expanding the means of usefulness of the common schools. The flood-gates of light, of knowledge and of progress, have been opened upon the ten thousand districts of the state, and it is no longer in the power either of ignorance or of delusion to turn back the strong tide of living waters which are now fertilizing every portion of the state, and causing the "wilderness to bud and blossom as the rose." What has already been accomplished richly repays the sacrifices and exertions which have been made for its accomplishment, and were it even possible for us to stop here in our active exertions for the advancement of the interests of education, the impulse which has been given by the united and systematic measures of the two past years, will of itself carry on the great work of intellectual, moral and social improvement for years, perhaps for centuries to come. As the pioneers in this noble and far-reaching undertaking—worthy of the intelligence, enterprise and civilization of the nineteenth century—those faith-

ful public servants who have nobly buffeted the storms of popular prejudice, and faced the torrent of unsparing invective, in their endeavors to promote the true interests of humanity, are entitled at the hands of every true patriot and philanthropist, to a meed of approbation earned by few of the benefactors of the race.

S. S. R.

[For the Journal.]

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF HUDSON.

HAVING had an opportunity recently of visiting the public schools in the city of Hudson, I ask permission, Mr. Editor, to make known through your Journal, the very great pleasure and instruction which I received. I had often conceived, previously, of a system of public instruction for our cities and villages, which, it seemed to me, would be an essential improvement upon that generally prevailing; in the schools of Hudson such conceptions were more than realized. If you wish to make converts to a system of municipal instruction, which is *at once cheap, thorough and liberal*, send all who doubt to Hudson. Should you desire to fortify them in their attachment to methods which multiply schools but diminish the number of scholars; which exempt the people from one form of taxation only to render the burdens in other respects ten-fold more heavy; which leave multitudes to grow up without instruction, and perpetuate a superficial system of teaching and superintendence, then let me advise you, sir, to warn them against the danger of looking in upon the schools of Hudson.

They are three in number, each containing from 150 to 200 pupils. They are situated in different quarters of the town, so as to accommodate all the inhabitants equally; each school is placed under a head master, who receives a respectable salary, (\$800 per annum, I believe,) and who is assisted always by one efficient female teacher, generally by two; he usually has also a male assistant. The plan of mutual instruction is also practiced to a limited extent; and the services of the older scholars are employed to assist in maintaining order.

The school-rooms are large and cheerful apartments, well warmed and ventilated, and liberally provided with maps, charts, black-boards, and all the other apparatus of good teaching. The teachers were evidently persons of good health and cheerful tempers, thoroughly interested in their work and proud of the success of their labors. Their deportment, so far as I could observe it in a visit made unexpectedly and without form, was precisely such as one could wish; evincing respect for themselves and sympathy with their pupils. It seemed to form, both in respect to manners and morals, a safe and salutary *example*; and the benign influence of such an example, held up week after week before all the children of a town, by those to whom they must look with deference and esteem—who can estimate sufficiently its power or blessedness?

The teaching has the best attributes of good elementary instruction—it is spirited and thorough; so given as to hold the close attention of all the pupils and inspire each one apparently with a deep interest in the progress of the recitation. The exercises are varied every few

minutes to prevent weariness, and the children are exercised so frequently in the first rudiments of the branches they study, that they cannot but be well grounded in them. In all the movements of the children too, in passing from one exercise to another, there is precision and promptness, and that prevailing regard for order, which seems to form the very soul of the system.

The proficiency of the pupils corresponds with the character of the instruction given. It should be remembered that these schools are composed promiscuously of children from all the families in the city; from those most respectable as well as from those least so. The truth is, that the advantages afforded at these schools are so superior, that no wise parent can afford to send his children elsewhere; thus all the young of the city are enjoying a substantial equality in regard to the means of primary education—and this equality is one to which the most favored children in many populous towns might well look up with envy. I have no where heard better reading, spelling or pronunciation, nor have I any where seen more promising specimens of penmanship or cyphering than in these schools. As I followed several classes through their exercises, and recollect how the very best instruction was thus brought within the reach of the poorest child in Hudson, I could not but deeply regret that the population of our large towns generally were not present with me, that they might see what can be done for schools and education, where there is the requisite disposition. It ought to be added, that the experiment of teaching music and drawing has been made in these schools with the most perfect success.

Is it asked to what these schools owe their existence and peculiar excellence? I answer, to the wisdom and liberality of the citizens. They are placed under the control of the public authorities, and the expenses are defrayed from a tax levied on the property of the inhabitants. In this, as in other instances, those who pay the heaviest taxes have been among those most active in procuring the passage of such laws as seemed, indeed, in the first instance, to impose on them increased burdens, but which they well knew would ultimately secure a greatly improved population to their town, and thus add new value and security to their estates. Honor to such enlightened and generous policy! May it find imitators in every village and city of the state, and may the time not be distant when the universal gathering cry shall be—*Good schools and free schools.*

I cannot close this hasty notice without adverting to the hearty interest taken in these schools by the leading citizens of the place. They are fostered by the clergy of all denominations as an ornament and blessing, and I had the privilege of seeing with my own eyes, how some of the most prominent laymen of the town are at home in them, and are looked up to, both by teachers and pupils as the fathers and benefactors of the enterprise. Their names are recorded on a more enduring page than mine, and future generations will soon rise up to call them blessed.

A. P.

Hudson, April. 1844.

[For the Journal.]

FREE SCHOOLS OF POUGHKEEPSIE.

DEAR SIR—It is presumed that you have been informed of the existence of an act passed by the Legislature of this state last session, establishing free schools in our village.

The Board of Education was organized in June last, and the first primary school was opened in August; No. 2, in September; No. 3, in December.

A large and substantial brick building was erected during the fall, for a grammar school, consisting of two departments capable of containing 125 pupils each, and in February the male department went into operation; the female department will open the first of May ensuing.

In the three primary schools, and the male department of the grammar school, there are about six hundred scholars; average attendance about 570. On Friday the 12th inst. there were public examinations in all the schools, a committee of the Board attending each school. A good number of our citizens attended, and so far as I can learn, they were highly pleased both with the management of the schools and the proficiency of the pupils.

The system is rapidly growing in public favor. Our citizens at the recent charter election without a dissenting voice, voted \$3,000 for the support of our schools, which sum, together with that received from the state, makes about \$4,400; with that sum the Board propose to educate nine hundred scholars for one year, including rent of buildings, fuel, &c. besides books for the primary schools. This is less than five dollars per scholar.

The Board propose opening another primary school soon, and also one for colored children, giving accommodations in all the schools for about 900 or 1,000 pupils, which will be the number, within 200, in all our schools previous to establishing the system; thereby saving in the expense of conducting the cause of popular education, not less than five thousand dollars annually.

It ought to be mentioned here, perhaps, that great praise is due the members of the Board of Education, for the able and disinterested manner in which they have performed their arduous and responsible duties. But few public bodies, composed as that has been, by a few individuals wanting true benevolence, would have accomplished what they have in such short time; whatever ever appeared to them their duty, was performed regardless of consequences.

We have some eight or ten academies and select schools among us that reflect the highest honor upon our village, as well as upon their respective teachers. In fact, this village has long been noted for its excellent academies and high schools, which are equalled by few and surpassed by none. Week before last was a kind of commencement week with us, and never has there been so much interest manifested by our citizens at these examinations as this season; and we confidently anticipate the day, not far distant, when our public schools will be looked upon as one of the chief objects of pride and glory of this most pleasant and delightful village.

PHILOM.

Poughkeepsie, April 15, 1844.

DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

We have long wished to call attention to this important but neglected department of female education. Our correspondent does not over-rate its importance, and we hope this communication may be the means of introducing the admirable work prepared by Miss Beecher on this subject, and published by the Massachusetts Board of Education, into immediate and general use.

Miss Beecher wishes to consult the friends of education on a subject, which, as it seems to her, does not receive its appropriate consideration. It is the introduction of *domestic economy* as a regular branch of *study* in all our female institutions.

She has been led to reflect on the importance of this, by extensive travels in all parts of this nation, during which she has been deeply impressed by the sufferings of her countrywomen from *poor health*, *poor domestics*, and an *imperfect domestic education*. The amount of evil and suffering from the destruction of female health is perfectly appalling, and the number of young women whose constitution and health are crushed ere the first few years of married life are past, would seem incredible to any one who had not investigated with this direct object in view.

The chief cause of this evil is that young girls are not *trained for their profession*. Domestic Economy is as truly a science as Political Economy or the medical profession. The physician develops his faculties and acquires knowledge at college, then he studies from books the experience of others, and then he applies this knowledge in practice. He would be deemed a lunatic, were he to assume that common sense and his own unaided experiments were all he needed.

In like manner a woman needs to develop her powers by a course of intellectual and moral training—then she needs to *study her profession*, in a work that combines the results gained by the experience of others, and then she must apply the principles thus gained in practice *after she leaves school*. But hitherto, that part of a woman's education which is strictly professional, has been left entirely out of her course of study. There are rules for the care of health, for the *healthful* preparation of food and drinks that can be studied and applied as much as rules of rhetoric and grammar. There are practical rules for economy in time and expenses, that can be committed to memory as readily as rules of arithmetic. There are directions in regard to clothing, cleanliness and exercise, founded on the laws of physiology, that can be studied as well as chemistry. There are rules for preserving a good temper, and the other social virtues, that are as worthy of being committed to memory as the abstract rules of moral philosophy. There are principles in regard to the economical and healthful construction of houses, of far more practical consequence than rules for the construction of diagrams in geometry. And thus with a multitude of domestic duties, where the experience of others can be collected and committed to memory as profitably as in any of the

branches of science now studied at female schools.

Is it said that girls can read books on such subjects at home? But so can they read any other book which they study at school, at home—and why is it that the science, in which, above all others, they have need of that practical wisdom which is gained by the experience of others, is selected as the one that may be left to chance, while all others are not only read but diligently studied? Why is it deemed of so much more importance to fix in a woman's mind, by study, the principles of all other sciences except that which is peculiarly her profession?

Domestic Economy should be placed at least on an equality with other sciences in female schools—because it embraces knowledge which is needed by all women, at all times and in all places—because it is peculiarly needed by American women, who have poorer health, more care and labor, and less domestic assistance than any other educated women—because the science will never be *properly* taught, until it is made a branch of study in female schools—because this method will secure a dignity and importance to the subject, which will never be accorded while every other science receives more attention and respect—and lastly, because it *can* be properly and systematically taught (not practically, but as a science,) in all female institutions.

Miss Beecher believes that this method will most effectually tend to remedy the evils which now occasion the destruction of female health. When young women are taught the construction of their own bodies and all the causes in domestic life that undermine the constitution—when they learn the best and most economical modes of employing time and money, and arranging domestic duties—when they learn rightly to appreciate domestic duties, and to engage in them with the interest and delight that far less useful sciences now call forth, the grand cause of this evil will be removed.

But how is this measure to be secured? There is such an unconsciousness of the evils to be remedied—such ignorance of the causes that operate to undermine the female constitution—such a prejudice against *labor*, as if it were degrading and unlady-like—such an aping of the rich by those of humbler means—such a universal impression that *intellectual* culture is the main thing in female education—such a common notion that domestic economy is a simple matter that any woman can learn by instinct as it were—that no prejudices and habits are more inveterate than those which oppose an enterprise like this.

For this reason it is, that Miss Beecher seeks the advice and co-operation of those who have that comprehensiveness of views which enables them to understand the merits of the case. Her time, interests and income, have for years been devoted to the cause of education, and in a state of infirm health that demands frequent journeys, there seems to be no way in which she could accomplish more, than by presenting this subject and securing whatever influence and aid the wise and influential may be able to confer.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The articles on "Drawing in Schools," and "Defects of Education," are unavoidably and unwillingly deferred until the next number.

TEA TABLE CONVERSATION.

The principal commenced the conversation by saying, 'I would propose for the subject of general conversation at this time—"The management of children." Let each endeavor to think of some maxim it would be well to observe in the treatment of your younger brothers and sisters.'

After a short pause, the young lady who sat nearest to the Principal, said, 'If you wish to gain the affection of children, always treat them with kindness.'

The others proceeded, without hesitation, to make the following remarks.

'Never deny them any innocent gratification without a good reason.'

'If you intend to allow them an indulgence they request, grant it freely, without requiring it to be purchased by some extra act of obedience.'

'If you think best to refuse, (subjoined another) do so at once, and never allow the child to gain any point by teasing.'

Do nothing to encourage children in saying smart things.'

'Avoid bringing them forward before company to exhibit their performances.'

'Never say to them, "You must try to be very good to-day, because company is coming." Let them feel, that is as important to be good at other times.'

GEOGRAPHY.

The position is assumed, that the first study of Geography should be the form and face of the earth, which can be clearly and definitely described and understood, only by the aid of maps. Pictorial illustrations are peculiarly pleasing to children. Every child loves nature's patterns. All agree to the fact, that early life is the time to receive the most lasting impressions; hence the propriety of presenting the study of maps to youth, even to those constituting the primary department of schools, to whom a knowledge of the topography of the world may be imparted, with great facility.

It is taken for granted, that every instructor arranges his school into classes, and that the studies pursued are in like manner arranged, with a period of time devoted to each. Without such system, little can be expected by way of improvement.

In order to produce such arrangement, the same elementary book should be used by all the scholars in the same class, viz: the same spelling-book, the same geography, the same arithmetic, English grammar, reading books, &c. The loss of time to children, and consequent loss of knowledge,—the irreparable loss of their being trained up without order and arrangement, mentally and physically,—with all the numerous disadvantages arising therefrom, imperatively demand that parents correct this evil by a uniformity of text-books.

The farmer and the mechanic arrange their business, and systematically pursue it—upon which depends their success. A contrary course is the true index of their failure. This is eminently the case with the teacher; but how can he arrange and systematize his business successfully, with such embarrassments in his way, as having almost as many different authors in the same class as there are scholars? Let parents heed the above suggestion, and teachers will see to it, that there

are no failures in the march of intellectual improvement in their schools.

The above evil in schools, as regards the study of geography, is remedied by the use of "Mitchell's Series of Outline Maps," which, with the accompanying key, (containing a regular course of instruction preparatory to the advanced study of "descriptive geography,") in the absence of other works, can be taught independently—one set being sufficient for the whole school, by supplying the scholars with the said key.

METHOD OF USING OUTLINE MAPS.

When the time devoted to the study of geography arrives, present before the school, first, map No. 1, (hemispheres.) As the scholars recite the geographical definitions, direct their eyes to a diagram of each topic upon the map, as they proceed, viz: if it be an ocean, a continent, peninsula, cape, isthmus, or island, &c., point to the same as represented upon the map, requiring every eye to fasten upon and conceive its form. By this process the mind clearly seizes and distinctly retains the form of that portion of the earth thus represented.

The science of geography may be taught in like manner. The form of the earth, the cardinal points, the equator, parallels of latitude, meridians of longitude; the tropics, circles and zones, may be presented to the mind through the medium of the eye, and the answers to the questions upon each topic may be repeated in concert by the whole school. Occasionally one scholar may be selected to exhibit the lesson and exercise the school upon the map before them, under the supervision of the teacher. This method will stimulate scholars to be thorough and correct in their recitations, each expecting the same distinction with that of his fellow, in due time; thus they become practical teachers.

Another exercise should not be omitted. When the map of any country or state is presented, devote a few moments silently to the sketching of the same upon the slate, as all may be occupied at the same time without inconvenience to each other. The form or boundary should first be drawn; next sketch the mountains and rivers, and lastly, locate the capital, and such other places as time will permit. A little practice in this exercise will enable the scholar to sketch rapidly, and with a good degree of correctness. The advantages are incalculable, distinctly fixing in the mind the various features and localities of the earth.

It will be profitable to devote one recitation to a review of the study of the past week, at which time a number of scholars may be occupied in turn in sketching upon the black-board before the school, permitting any scholar to point out and correct such errors as may appear. These are critical and pleasing exercises.

A few months of systematic instruction upon the Outlines, prepares the school for the next branch of this study, Descriptive Geography. The scholar being at home on every portion of the globe, is prepared to pursue it understandingly, and when accomplished, he is enabled to describe it with ease to himself, and to his audience.

Descriptive geography will be more highly interesting when occasionally accompanied with some thrilling historical event, and the recitations should be made with the map of the country described, in view to which reference should be had, thus associating in the mind, place and matter of fact, a desideratum in this study.

An advanced class may review the Outlines by topics. Suppose the Map of Europe to be reviewed. Let the following topics be exhibited before the school by such scholars as may volunteer or be designated, viz: 1st, boundary—2d, capes, bays, and gulfs—3d, mountains, lakes and rivers—4th, names of political divisions—5th, capitals of each—6th, vegetable and animal productions—7th, minerals—8th, outlines of government—9th, historical reminiscences—10th, biography, &c. &c. Scholars having the advantage of school district library, (an invaluable treasure if judiciously selected,) will astonish the most sanguine with the amount of information drawn therefrom, and brought forth on such occasions, and convince the most skeptical of the importance of this vast reservoir of intelligence. Minds thus exercised become richly stored with useful knowledge, well qualified for spheres of high and responsible stations in life, shedding a salutary and moral influence through all their associations. Such sons and daughters are a Nation's Treasure.

TO THE PUBLIC.

IMPROVED SYSTEM OF TEACHING GEOGRAPHY,

IN THE USE OF

MITCHELL'S SERIES OF OUTLINE MAPS FOR ACADEMIES AND SCHOOLS

More than one-half the time usually occupied in the study of Geography, may be saved by the use of Mitchell's Series of Outline Maps. These maps were arranged by Joseph H. Mather, whose attention has long been directed particularly to the improvement of that department of education. The drawings were executed with great care and correctness by S. Augustus Mitchell, whose geographical works and maps of the world stand so deservedly popular. The advantage derived in presenting every thing that has form and locality, to the mind through the medium of the eye, by diagram, is no longer problematical. All things pertaining to the earth have form and locality. By these, continents, and their sub-divisions, mountains, islands, oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, &c., are known and distinguished one from the other. This is called *TOPOGRAPHY*. A thorough knowledge of the topography of the earth is of the first importance. By this method a whole school of sixty or more scholars may be instructed at the same time, and with the same ease and facility as a single class of ten or less number of scholars. The Outline Maps are designed to be used in all recitations in geography, both ancient and modern, (an additional four sheet map of that part of Europe, south of latitude 55°, upon which both ancient and modern countries are represented, has lately been added to the former series, without additional charge,) and lectures upon geography and history can be clearly illustrated upon them.

The oceans, seas, lakes, the continents, mountains, islands, deserts, the locations of important places, of colleges, battle-fields, rail-roads, canals, the boundaries and political divisions, are distinctly delineated and represented upon twenty-four maps, substantially backed with cloth, bound with tape, and prepared to be suspended with rings, covering a space of about one hundred and sixty square feet. They are so constructed as to fold together when not in use, and enclosed in a port folio. They may be used many years, and thus kept in the most perfect order. A key accompanies this work, for the use of both teacher and pupil, in which the geographical definitions are briefly yet explicitly exhibited, together with the science of geography, with a set of questions for exercise upon each map. This is a cheap volume, and fully supplies every requirement in the study of topography, preparatory for the study of descriptive geography. We are sustained by the testimony of teachers of the highest distinction, who have tested their utility, in stating to the public that by the aid of this "Series of Outline Maps," a thorough knowledge of the topography of the world may be imparted to a class, or a whole school, in a few months only; while, by the former mode of study, years have

been spent by the student without being able to give the form of his own state—its mountains and rivers—even with tolerable correctness upon the black-board, without the aid of a map before him. *THIS SHOULD NOT BE SO.*

The topography of the world should first be taught in the school upon the Outline Maps, then review the same with the accompanying study of descriptive geography, by which manner the study becomes systematized and thoroughly accomplished.

The publishers would here tender their grateful acknowledgments to those gentlemen and ladies, teachers and friends of education, who have patronized this system of instruction, many of whom have favored us with their recommendations of the work.

Among them, we would notice the names of the Hon. S. Young, Secretary of the State of New-York, and Superintendent of Common Schools; S. S. Randall, Esq., Deputy State Superintendent; Hon. J. A. Dix; T. Remey Beck, M. D. LL. D., Albany Academy; Hon. G. Hawley, LL. D.; J. N. Campbell, D. D.; A. Crittenton, A. M., Principal Albany Female Academy; Charles Anthon, LL. D., Professor of Languages, Columbia College; Cyrus Mason, D. D., Rector of University Grammar School; I. Ferris, D. D., President of Rutgers' Female Seminary; Professor C. Dewey, Rochester Collegiate Institute; Henry Howe, A. M., Principal Canandaigua Academy; Professor George R. Perkins, Utica Academy; James Nichols, A. M., Utica Female Academy; J. L. Mayo, M. D., Principal of the Syracuse High School; and many others.

New-Brunswick, Nov. 23d, 1842.

At a meeting of the committee appointed by the Society of Teachers and Friends of Education in New-Jersey, to recommend a series of Standard School Books to be used in the Schools of this State, it was

Resolved, That Mitchell's Series of Outline Maps be approved and recommended for general use as an important auxiliary in teaching Geography.

A. ACKERMAN, *Secretary of Committee.*

Says Professor Anthon: "Mitchell's Series of Outline Maps have been used for some time past in the Grammar School of Columbia College, with the most gratifying success. No school should be without them." Dr. Mason says: "We cordially recommend them to the guardians of education."

An Agent, or some bookseller in each county of the State, will supply those schools which by law or otherwise are prepared to purchase.

MATHER, CASE, TIFFANY & BURNHAM,

Publishers.

HARTFORD, CONN. January, 1844.

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